

Wacky church doctrines due to ignorance of absolute and relative perspectives



Failure to distinguish the absolute from the relative perspective is the cause of many wacky and unscriptural church doctrines.

One of these is: "God, in His absolute sovereignty, has chosen to give every person his and her own absolute sovereignty (free will)." How could people say something so illogical? Easy. They put verses demonstrating God's sovereignty next to verses showing men and women making choices, then assume both verses to be absolute truth. If only they could realize that God's sovereignty is absolute, while man's is relative, such asinine doctrine could never have arisen to confuse the saints.

Absolute vs. Relative: definitions

Absolute: An unconditional and unlimited perspective, not compared with anything but itself. Something not dependent upon external conditions for existence.

Relative: Existing or having its significance only by relation to something else. Not an absolute or independent perspective. Something dependent upon external conditions for existence.

Martin Zender's Clanging Gong News

"If I know all mysteries and all knowledge, but have no love, I am a clanging gong" --1 Cor. 13:1-2



Two out of three isn't bad.

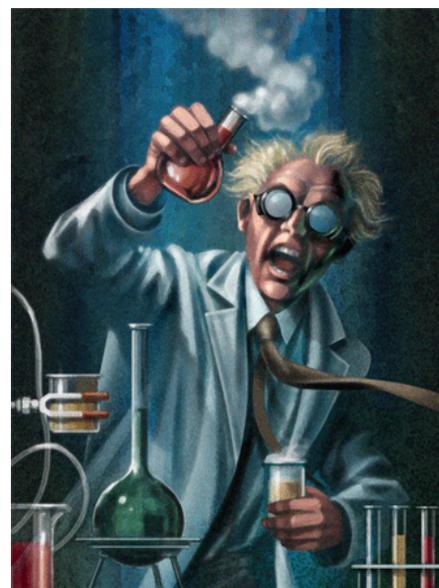
Martin Zender: Mad Scientist of Holy Scripture

I have proof from scripture that God doesn't know everything. I realize that this is breakthrough doctrine—the ignorance of God, that is—but I am a breakthrough kind of guy. I realize that my proof text contradicts **1 John 3:20**, which says that God *does* know everything, but I am not going to let this bother me. My proof text is Genesis 3:9. In this important verse, God asks, "Adam, where are you?"

Next, I have proof from the scriptures that, apart from the sacrifice of Christ, some people are already righteous. I know this contradicts **Romans 3:10**, which says that "not one is righteous, no, not one," but this only highlights the stupendous nature of my discovery. In Luke 1:5-6, Zechariah and Elizabeth are called, "righteous before God."

That is not all. I have proof from scripture that people must seek God in order to find Him. I realize that my finding contradicts **Romans 3:11**, which says, "There is none that seeketh after God," but these contradictions are coming to bother me less and less. My proof text is Matthew 7:7, "Seek, and you shall find."

My genius for finding these kinds of verses astounds even me.



The following piece of research is earth-shattering in its significance. I actually have proof from the Word of God that there are some people in this world who are *not* of God. The shocking aspect of this revelation is that my finding directly contradicts Paul's apparently naïve statement in **2 Corinthians 5:18**, "All is of God." Oh, well. 1 John 3:10 is the important thing. It says, "Everyone

(Continued on page 2)



Clanging Gong News **YIKES!** Chart

Which of the following are true?

- 1 Jn. 3:20 God knows all.....Gen. 3:9 God does not know where Adam is
- Rom. 3:10 "There is none righteous"Lk. 1:5-6 Zech. and Elizabeth are righteous
- Rom. 3:11 "None seek after God"Mt. 7:7 "Seek and you shall find"
- 2 Cor. 5:18 "All is of God"1 Jn. 3:10 The unrighteous are not of God
- Jn. 15:16 "You have not chosen Me"Josh. 24:15 "Choose whom you will serve"
- Rom. 11:8 God hardened IsraelMt. 23:37 "I want to assemble...you will not"

...mad scientist

(Continued from page 1)

who is not doing righteousness is not of God.”

And now for my *crème de la* revelation. I, Martin Zender, have not one (1), but two (2) proof verses—from scripture—showing men (and women, no doubt) exercising their free wills. The first is Joshua 24:15, “Choose this day whom you will serve.” (Do not be troubled by the fact that this contradicts our Lord’s statement in **John 15:16**, “You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.” We should be used to these contradictions by now, and quite practiced in ignoring them.) The second proof verse is Matthew 23:37. Our Lord speaks to Israel, saying: “How many times do I want to assemble your children... *but you will not.*” Of course, this contradicts

All of scripture is true; what is the *perspective*?

Sorry to shock you with my new “revelations.” But many have done in reality what I have just done tongue-in-cheek: they have chosen to ignore certain verses of scripture in order to embrace others. How could all the verses listed at the bottom of Page 1 be true? It is the difference between the absolute and relative perspectives, defined for you on the Page 1 sidebar.

Absolutely speaking, God does know everything. He’s God, for God’s sake. Whenever God comes across as surprised, shocked, or otherwise perplexed, He is speaking of Himself *in relation to man* (the relative viewpoint), employing a figure of speech known as Condescension, where God lowers Himself to the level of man in order to communicate with him. To establish absolute doctrine from this figure of speech is a fatal (and stupid) practice.

In Luke 1, we are considering the behavior of Zechariah and Elizabeth *in relation to* (the relative viewpoint again) the behavior of the rest of the priesthood. Compared with clowns like Ananias and Caiaphas, this couple *was* righteous. In Romans 3:10, however, Paul is considering the whole of humanity against the backdrop of the absolute righteousness of God. And guess what? Against this backdrop, *none* are righteous.

Rom. 3:11 and Matt. 7:7? No contradiction here, just different viewpoints. That none seek after God is *absolutely* true. Man is helpless in

Paul’s plain statement that it was God, not the Jews, Who hardened the Jews (**Romans 11:7-8**), but here we go with Paul again; the man is really starting to bug me.

I hope everyone realizes that I have been speaking facetiously. My purpose has been to detail for you what appear to be real and troubling contradictions from the Word of God. *But the Word of God never contradicts itself!* What we have been considering is the difference between the absolute and the relative perspectives. For more detail, keep reading! ■

Absolutely.

this department. That our Lord invited some to seek Him only proves that our Lord invited some to seek Him. Where did the ability to seek come from, if none are seeking God? From God. John 6:44— “No one can come to Me if ever the Father should not be drawing him.”

How can all be of God if some people are not of God? Absolute versus relative truth again. Some people are not of God *only in relation to other people*. Our Lord said that the Pharisees were of their father, the Adversary. This was in relation to the apostles, who were friends of God, not adversaries. All this was of God.

(Continued on page 3)



Warning!
God did not
make this
man!

What a Revelation!

THE BIG FISH SYNDROME



When confronting absolute and relative verses side-by-side, why do most people embrace the relative and ignore the absolute? Because the relative perspective makes people feel bigger. People would rather think of themselves as big fish in a little pond (in relation to, say, their neighbors) versus specks of plankton in the ocean (in relation to God and His universe). Thus, the majority of Christians (a proud and haughty bunch) either ignore, disbelieve, or explain away the verses on the left side of the **YIKES!** Chart.

Q&A

Why does God put both relative and absolute verses in scripture? Doesn't this only confuse people?

God is merciful. In His mercy, He considers the sensitivity of the immature. Many simply cannot handle absolute truth. Tell some people, “You cannot come to Christ unless God draws you (which is absolute truth, John 6:44), and the immature person will become fatalistic.

Those becoming mature in Christ, however, long to hear absolute truth. It never stops them from playing their part. For these, God lifts the veil. “All is of God!” (2 Cor. 5:18). Knowing why things happen the way they do comforts the man of maturity, who *loves* to feel small in the great arms of God.



Rants & Stuff

The Apostle Paul says we should not murmur.
Therefore, I shall rant (Philippians 2:14).



Louie don't get it

I had a discussion not long ago with a friend who could not distinguish the relative viewpoint from the absolute.

Louie: Revelation 3:20 says that Christ stands at the door and knocks, and if anyone should be hearing and opening the door, Christ will come in.

Martin: I know it.

Louie: Then what is this baloney I hear about you believing that man doesn't have a free will?

Martin: It's not baloney, Louie, it's prime rib. Man *doesn't* have a free will. There is not a single verse in scripture that says so.

Louie: There are thousands of them.

Martin: Produce one, please.

Louie: I just did.

Martin: All that verse proves is that Jesus stands at the door and knocks, and that some answer and enter, and some don't.

Louie: Well?

Martin: *Why* do some answer while others don't?

Louie: How should I know?

Martin: You've gone to church for 35 years, so that's a legitimate question. In Revelation 3:20, our Lord is merely describing what is happening on the

stage. This is the relative viewpoint. Our Lord lifts the veil on the absolute viewpoint to His disciples in Matthew 13:11, telling them, "To you has it been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of the heavens, yet to those it has not been given."

Louie: Are you telling me that God Himself decides who opens the door and who doesn't?

Martin: Not me. Scripture.

Louie: You sure it's not a contradiction?

Martin: Scripture never contradicts itself. We're looking at the same scene from two perspectives: one from the stage, the other from above the stage. It's the relative versus the absolute perspective.

Louie: *You* should be on the stage.

Martin: Really? You think so?

Louie: Yeah. The one that leaves Dodge at six o'clock tomorrow morning!



“GOD ...what is the *perspective?*
CHOOSSES
THOSE WHO
WILL CHOOSE
HIM.”

(Continued from page 2)

“Choose this day whom you will serve” only proves that some choose God, and some do not; we are relating (relative perspective) one group to another. To get to the absolute truth, ask yourself, **WHY** do some choose God while others do not. The answer: God chooses those who will choose Him.

Our Lord wanted to assemble Israel, but they would not. True enough, *from the human viewpoint*, which is limited. As a man, Christ Himself takes this viewpoint. Is it absolute truth? No. The absolute truth is that God hardened Israel.

Isn't it wonderful to be able to believe ALL of Scripture? ■

