

**TASC**

TASC's mission is to rebuild and strengthen the foundation of the Christian faith by increasing awareness of the scientific evidence supporting the literal biblical account of creation and refuting evolution.

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## How Much of God's Inerrant Word May We Ignore?

By Phillip Johnson

**W**e live in deceptive times. The air of deception permeates society like no other time of history. Censorship, oppression, and the abolishment of freedom to think for yourself is lurking just ahead. As followers of Christ, we need to be aware, first off, not of what is going on around us, but of what kind of relationship we have with our Creator, Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and coming King!

First, we must realize what we are. In Jeremiah, the Lord tells us:

The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*,  
And desperately wicked;  
Who can know it?  
I, the LORD, search the heart,  
I test the mind,  
Even to give every man according to his ways,  
According to the fruit of his doings. (Jeremiah 17:9–10, NKJV)

Later on, in Jeremiah God tells us: "All mankind is stupid, devoid of knowledge." (Jeremiah 51:17a, NASB) In Isaiah we learn more of what God says we are:

Therefore the Lord will have no joy in their young men,  
Nor have mercy on their fatherless and widows;  
For everyone *is* a hypocrite and an evildoer,  
And every mouth speaks folly. (Isaiah 9:17, NKJV)

Rather than go into all of our shortfalls this is enough to get the idea that we have problems.

While the Old Testament talked about deeds, which the Law was able to dictate as good or evil; Jesus taught the concept that our thought lives were the source of good and evil in our lives, and we are held accountable there

also. Jesus taught that not just the act of adultery, or the physical part, was a condemnation, but that to look on a woman with lust had the same consequences as the physical act.<sup>1</sup> Not only are we not able to keep the Law but we now have a higher standard presented about our thoughts and motives. While God's standard is true throughout history and has not changed it was revealed in different dispositions.

While the battle rages in our thought life, it could be considered also as the war between the flesh and the spirit. When a person comes to Christ, he becomes a new creation as we see in 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *this person is* a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." (NASB)<sup>2</sup> We are new creations, but we are not perfect. "For if anyone thinks that he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself." (Galatians 6:3)<sup>3</sup> The spirit of God lives in those who accept Christ as their Savior, and a relationship is created. This is new because before a person accepts Christ, they are spiritually dead;<sup>4</sup> there is a new spiritual life that did not exist before, and this life creates a new relationship with the living God. Since God is outside of time, He can see us now as we will be after we are transformed into the image of His son. He sees the blood covering, and all the redemption papers signed by His son and all that is left is for the final adoption papers to be signed and served to each of His children.

Unfortunately, everyone still has the albatross of the flesh with us. We struggle with its lusts and desires. As a whole, we want what we want when we want it! "For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were *brought to light* by the Law, were at work in the parts of our body to bear fruit for death." (Romans 7:5) Why do we struggle so much with the flesh? Because "the mind

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 5:27–28 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." NASB

<sup>2</sup> All scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise noted.

<sup>3</sup> It is important in our lives to remember that while we live in the flesh, we can deceive ourselves all too easily.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Peter 4:6 "For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead, that though they are judged in the flesh as people, they may live in the spirit according to *the will of God*." (NASB)

set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Romans 8:7–8) Even with the flesh trying to drag us down we have the power of the Holy Spirit to help us. “However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.” (Romans 8:9) Paul summed up the struggle in Romans 7:15: “For I do not understand what I am doing; for I am not practicing what I want *to do*, but I do the very thing I hate.”

When God tells us not to do something, it is logical and obvious that we are capable of ignoring His command by doing that forbidden thing; it is also reasonable if God tells us to do something, we are able to choose not to do so. “Do not quench the Spirit, do not utterly reject prophecies, but examine everything; hold firmly to that which is good, abstain from every form of evil.” (1 Thessalonians 5:19–22) We do have the ability to quench the Spirit in our lives, thereby hindering our ability to live in obedience and victory.<sup>5</sup> This brings up the fact that we as believers, as well as nonbelievers, can choose to believe what God says or not to believe.

Looking at what we are, in the flesh: at best, pathetic; but as a new creation filled with the Spirit, the question to consider is: “Do we believe God?” The question is not do we understand everything God has told us, but do we believe God? There are many heresies growing in the church, we were warned that wolves would come into the fold to destroy the flock and the thief would come to kill and destroy. If you remember when Paul was about to be shipwrecked, he told his fellow shipmates: “Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told.” (Acts 27:25) God had given Paul a promise there would be no loss of life if they obeyed Him.

The question “Do we believe God?” does not deal with subjects that cannot readily be understood, such as eschatological prophecies full of symbolism. Much of the prophecies may not be fully understandable until God fulfills them. We can believe but not understand it all.

The question is really “How much of God’s Word can you not believe and still have a relationship with Him?” or another way to say it and still have salvation? This is not about once saved always saved, apostasy, or how to be saved; it is about a personal relationship between us and God. He created us and knows how we work; He knows each of us intimately better than we know ourselves. Remember we can deceive ourselves very easily and the

flesh desires its own lusts. To not accept God’s Word is saying one of the following to God: “I am smarter than you and I know better than you do” or “You are lying.” What kind of relationship do you have with someone who does not believe much of what you say? People say evolution is true and even claim to know Christ; they do not learn evolution from the Bible, but from external sources such as from science or the media. When a person stands before Jesus, do they really want to have to explain why they didn’t believe Him? The question is really terrifying when considered. We all have enough shame when we stand before Christ. Do we really want to have things we could avoid if we only took time to ask Him to help us understand and believe? We need to follow Paul’s example and believe God.✠

## COMING EVENTS

### TASC Zoom Meeting, Thursday, April 14, 7:00 pm EDT

Phillip Johnson will be discussing how as believers we must believe God and accept what He says. Even though we do not agree on every point, we should use scripture as the foundation for all our theology and let scripture interpret scripture and not make a doctrine on just one verse. We will discuss mankind’s weaknesses in how it relates to the final question: “How much of what God says can you not believe and still have a saving relationship with Him?”

Join Zoom Meeting

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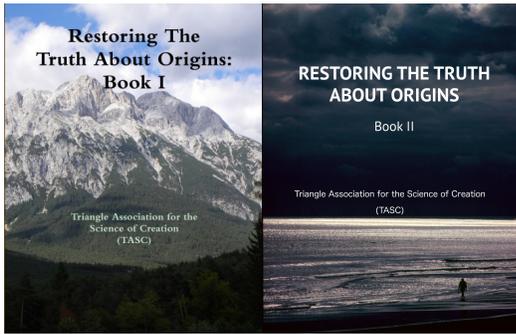
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<sup>5</sup>Ephesians 4:30 “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”



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