

## The Reversal of Argumentation

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By Donald Willis

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Gradually over recent years, the plea of preachers has somewhat changed. Preachers have become more educated. Congregations have demanded certain changes take place. Preachers have been willing to tickle their ears, thus yielding ground to their unauthorized whims. This generation has been reared with institutionalism almost inseparably connected with it. We practice because we have always practiced . . . !

Whereas, tradition has never "authorized by God" any action!

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Brethren, let us all hold to the truth, demanding scriptural authorization for every action that we do. One can know this is right!



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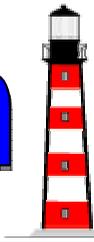
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Volume 6, Issue 36

July 12, 2015

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By Robert F. Turner

### How can man get to God?



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Larry Rouse  
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Larry Rouse  
Evangelist and Editor

"Now my idea about heaven is. . ." and then the writer or speaker reveals himself far more than he tells us about heaven. The materialist, sensual, mystical, aesthetic, and surrealist all have a field day with heaven. It is "pie in the sky" to those who ridicule its reality; and an extremely plush "paid vacation" for those who equate "real" with earthly literalism.

"Heaven" is a divinely revealed place, state, or condition; and we can know only that which is revealed about it in God's word. We say "place" with some hesitation, using accommodative language; for "location" is space related, and may lose its literal significance when applied to eternity. But God's word is directed to time and space related beings, and information about deity and eternity are necessarily couched in terms that translate into mental images. We can not truly imagine "eternity" or things eternal in nature, so we must expect the Bible to use anthropomorphisms: whereby things of God, totally incomprehensible to mortal man, are described in the time and space terms of man.

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Paul wrote: "Our citizenship is in heaven: whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20). Philippi was a Roman colony, where citizens were mostly retired soldiers, given full citizenship in the "mother" city Rome. Though far from that city, they dressed Roman, spoke Latin, observed Roman morals, were governed by Roman magistrates, "remained unshakably and unalterably Roman" (cf. Barclay). Paul was saying the Christian, no matter where he is, must never forget he is a citizen of heaven; and his conduct must match his citizenship. To this kind of people, heaven is "going home." Oh what a wonderful thought to those who have practiced heavenly citizenship, longing for the day when they will dwell in God's presence. "Home to heaven" will be a happy trip for those who, on earth, hunger and thirst after righteousness (Matt. 5:6). But what of those who have no such taste? Can we expect them to long for a life totally different from what they now pursue?

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I am persuaded heaven is not for everyone. It is a prepared place for a prepared people. Heaven's invitation is not limited; its glories are available to all. But many are ill prepared for heaven, and I cannot believe God would force heaven upon anyone. There is an old story about a slave whose "Massa" had died, and who was asked if he thought the Master had gone to heaven. He said the "Massa" always talked about places he planned to visit, and made great preparation for going there. But "Massa" never talked about heaven, and made no preparation for that destination. "Chances are he ain't makin' dat trip!"

Sorry - I can't tell you any more about heaven than what you can read in the Scriptures; and I can tell that only in terms used by the Holy Spirit to give us some idea of its wonders. But God's word clearly warns us of an ultimate "last day" when judgment shall be declared, and we shall face one of two eternal destinies. The righteous dead shall be there (1 Thess. 4:16), and so shall the wicked. "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" (Jn. 5:28-29). Christ makes it clear that the destinies are the same duration: saying, "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life" (Matt. 25:46).

Whatever heaven will be like, it will be "home" for the Christian, and an end to the struggles of this life. Those who are striving to serve God in the here and now, are going to love it. I doubt that those who ridicule the godly life would be happy there. And that is doubly sad, for it is highly unlikely they will like the other place.



## Faultfinding and Righteous Judgment are Poles Apart

By Tim Nichols

Learn to listen to all that God's word has to say concerning your life and conduct. Those who can and will show you your errors according to God's standards are your friends and ought to be treasured as such.

Faultfinding is easy work. Those who set out to find fault with their fellowman will never be disappointed. These can easily establish their own arbitrary standards and then judge the actions of others according to them. Arbitrary standards can be established either before or after the other person acts. Such rules are, by their nature, portable and easily exchanged for other arbitrary decrees. They can be completely inconsistent with each other and yet remain in the same carrying case. The arbitrary judge carries with him ammunition for any side of any battle.

After he decides to either attack or defend he can select the arbitrary standards that work in his favor and apply them to his advantage. He can justify any evil and vilify any good by the skillful application of his homemade rules. He can paint matters that are morally neutral with the black brush of contempt or with the pure white brush of virtue at his own choosing. His arbitrary judgments, though, are condemned by God.

"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck out of your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye" (Matthew 7:1-5).

"Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight!" (Isaiah 5:20, 21).

Jesus and John the Baptist were both plagued with arbitrary judges who were able to use their changeable rules to find fault with opposite behaviors!

"But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their

companions, and saying: 'We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not lament.' For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by her children" (Matthew 11:16-19).

Learn to ignore such critics unless you are able to find something valuable in what they have

to suggest. If such men are numbered among your "friends" you will want to keep an eye on the relationships and avoid having them take your "side" in any dispute. Their syllogisms are slippery, their logic is leaky, and their reasons are unreliable. Their "assistance" will sabotage the cause of truth every time and your association with them will rob you of your influence for good.

God's standards are revealed, fixed, and unchanging. He has defined right and wrong. He has revealed what is good and evil and He has placed His standards in an inspired volume for all to read. His children are those who have discarded their own notions about what they, and others, ought to believe and do, -- and they have replaced them with God's. When they apply what God has revealed to men's lives (first to their own, and then to others) they "judge with righteous judgment" (John 7:24). They apply God's wisdom and not their own. They see and know what God has given them the standards to judge (Matthew 7:15-20).

Learn to listen to all that God's word has to say concerning your life and conduct. Those who can and will show you your errors according to God's standards are your friends and ought to be treasured as such. Those who know God's standards and who will not show you your errors according to God's word cannot reasonably be considered your friends or God's servants



## The Reversal of Argumentation

Gospel preachers of past generations were willing to go into any neighborhood and begin to plead for the old paths. They would issue challenges to false teachers, and genuinely plead for a "thus saith the Lord" in all matters of doctrine, organization, morals, etc.

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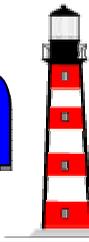
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Romans 7 the body, with its fleshly appetites, is seen as a "law" (force) which wars against the inward man or mind desirous of doing God's will. The conflict results in a "wretched man," captive to sin in his members, and delivered only by forgiveness through Christ (7:18f). The Christian must strive to "put to death the deeds of the body" (8:13). Paul then promises that though we, "groan and travail in pain... now" (8:22); we wait for our adoption, to wit, "the redemption of our body" (v. 23). This body, with appetites which war against our desire to serve God, will be changed in heaven - the conflict will be over. How wonderful for those who war against the flesh here! But what of those who "let themselves go," and revel in appetites of the flesh? Do they long for a body change, with fleshly appetites removed?

I am persuaded heaven is not for everyone. It is a prepared place for a prepared people. Heaven's invitation is not limited; its glories are available to all. But many are ill prepared for heaven, and I cannot believe God would force heaven upon anyone. There is an old story about a slave whose "Massa" had died, and who was asked if he thought the Master had gone to heaven. He said the "Massa" always talked about places he planned to visit, and made great preparation for going there. But "Massa" never talked about heaven, and made no preparation for that destination. "Chances are he ain't makin' dat trip!"

Sorry - I can't tell you any more about heaven than what you can read in the Scriptures; and I can tell that only in terms used by the Holy Spirit to give us some idea of its wonders. But God's word clearly warns us of an ultimate "last day" when judgment shall be declared, and we shall face one of two eternal destinies. The righteous dead shall be there (1 Thess. 4:16), and so shall the wicked. "Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" (Jn. 5:28-29). Christ makes it clear that the destinies are the same duration: saying, "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life" (Matt. 25:46).

Whatever heaven will be like, it will be "home" for the Christian, and an end to the struggles of this life. Those who are striving to serve God in the here and now, are going to love it. I doubt that those who ridicule the godly life would be happy there. And that is doubly sad, for it is highly unlikely they will like the other place.



## Faultfinding and Righteous Judgment are Poles Apart

By Tim Nichols

Learn to listen to all that God's word has to say concerning your life and conduct. Those who can and will show you your errors according to God's standards are your friends and ought to be treasured as such.

Faultfinding is easy work. Those who set out to find fault with their fellowman will never be disappointed. These can easily establish their own arbitrary standards and then judge the actions of others according to them. Arbitrary standards can be established either before or after the other person acts. Such rules are, by their nature, portable and easily exchanged for other arbitrary decrees. They can be completely inconsistent with each other and yet remain in the same carrying case. The arbitrary judge carries with him ammunition for any side of any battle.

After he decides to either attack or defend he can select the arbitrary standards that work in his favor and apply them to his advantage. He can justify any evil and vilify any good by the skillful application of his homemade rules. He can paint matters that are morally neutral with the black brush of contempt or with the pure white brush of virtue at his own choosing. His arbitrary judgments, though, are condemned by God.

"Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck out of your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye" (Matthew 7:1-5).

"Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight!" (Isaiah 5:20, 21).

Jesus and John the Baptist were both plagued with arbitrary judges who were able to use their changeable rules to find fault with opposite behaviors!

"But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their

companions, and saying: 'We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not lament.' For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by her children" (Matthew 11:16-19).

Learn to ignore such critics unless you are able to find something valuable in what they have

to suggest. If such men are numbered among your "friends" you will want to keep an eye on the relationships and avoid having them take your "side" in any dispute. Their syllogisms are slippery, their logic is leaky, and their reasons are unreliable. Their "assistance" will sabotage the cause of truth every time and your association with them will rob you of your influence for good.

God's standards are revealed, fixed, and unchanging. He has defined right and wrong. He has revealed what is good and evil and He has placed His standards in an inspired volume for all to read. His children are those who have discarded their own notions about what they, and others, ought to believe and do, -- and they have replaced them with God's. When they apply what God has revealed to men's lives (first to their own, and then to others) they "judge with righteous judgment" (John 7:24). They apply God's wisdom and not their own. They see and know what God has given them the standards to judge (Matthew 7:15-20).

Learn to listen to all that God's word has to say concerning your life and conduct. Those who can and will show you your errors according to God's standards are your friends and ought to be treasured as such. Those who know God's standards and who will not show you your errors according to God's word cannot reasonably be considered your friends or God's servants

