

The oneness and harmony of the Bible is undeniable. Written by forty authors, under the most varied conditions imaginable, thousands of years apart, and yet they all have one grand theme. However, one cannot deny that within its pages there are truths that seemingly are opposed to each other. The reason for this is, **TRUTH IS TWO FOLD!**

To find truth one must trace the different results of truth to its *one* principle. Our tendency is that if anything stands in the way of our understanding of truth, we elude, and deny, anything that seems destructive to our point of view.

This is not so with God! There is a principle what is referred to as "ANTINOMY," that means, as Mr. Webster tells us, "*The opposition between one law, principle, or rule; contradiction between two statements both apparently obtained by correct reasoning.*"

God is continually acting with two seemingly opposed principles

Let me ask, "*What keeps the planets of the universe moving in perfect order?*" It is not one force, but two forces, each pulling in opposite directions. Either one of these forces alone would pull the earth out of order. But, the earth moves between two forces in perfect harmony.

The air that we breathe is composed of two opposite qualities; either one of these components alone would kill us immediately.

The bodies we live in are subject to two opposite actions of two different forces: decay and life.

The "*salt*" that we use is a compound of two substances, sodium and chloride; either one of these alone would destroy us.

Why should we wonder then if two seemingly opposed principles are found in Scripture?

UNITY IN PLURALITY - PLURALITY IN UNITY

- Acts 16:14, "*Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened*"
- Acts 16:48, "*As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.*"
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13, "*God has from the beginning chose you to salvation.*"
- Ephesians 1:4, "*He [God] has chosen us in Him [Christ Jesus] before the foundation of the world.*"

Here we have one side of truth stated, however, on the other hand you have:

- Acts 17:11, "*They received the Word with all readiness of mind.*"
Verse 12 continues, "*Therefore many of them believed*"

- John 5:10, "You will not come unto Me that you might have life."
- Acts 17:30, "God commands all men everywhere to repent."

Matthew 11:20-22 is another example of this principle, it states, "Then began He [Jesus] to upbraid [reproach, or denounce] the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable [more bearable - or - they will fare better] for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you." (verses 25-26) "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

One cannot help but notice the responsibility of man & the sovereignty of God in close contact in this passage of Scripture.

Philippians 2:12-13 is another good example, it states, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Again, man's responsibility and God's sovereignty are closely interwoven in one sentence.

Our first reaction is to try and reconcile these two statements and bring them into one. Most people, when they find this impossible simply fix on one and reject the other. Therefore, many form an unscriptural "oneness" in their mind, refusing to listen to any opposing truth.

Permit me to give a few illustrations:

"Arminianism" is the teaching of Jacobus Arminius; that was, "One can lose his salvation." "Calvanism," the teaching of John Calvin, that one "Can never lose one's salvation, no matter what he does."

Either extreme can be dangerous. The teaching of Arminianism can bring about self-reliance and glorify man abilities, while Calvanism can bring spiritual sluggishness and spiritual inactivity.

Extreme Arminianism makes man independent of God; denies God infinite foreknowledge and boundless mercy and power to forgive, while extreme Calvanism can swallow up man responsibility, foster inactivity, and even makes God sanction sin.

So, which are we to believe? Must we take for granted that we must choose between the two?

The same God that spoke one side of this truth, gave us the other side as well.

Let's look at the age-old controversy of the perseverance of the saints

Jesus said in John 10:28, "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish" Romans 8:39 states, "Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God." (also read verses 35-39).

Yet, Matthew 10:23 teaches, "He who endures to the end shall be saved." Again, we see two sides of truth.

Look at the Biblical teaching of "Justification." Is it received by faith or by works? Romans 3:20 states, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight;" while Romans 3:28 states, "Therefore man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." And the 2nd chapter of James teaches, "By works is a man justified, not by faith alone!"

WHAT IS TRUTH:

Truth is like two trains rushing toward each other as if they will crash headlong into each other however they pass each other because they are on different rails. It is the same Rail Road, but different tracks.

There are no contradictions in God's Word!

Whether we can harmonize two principles or not, we must receive and act on both of them!

- Do we intend to call God to the bar of our weak and often mistaken intelligence?
- Are we going to trust God only as far as our understanding goes?

Martin Luther said, "Man in his search for truth is like a drunken peasant. You help him up on one side of his horse and he falls over on the other side. God knows the opposite directions that the sinful heart of man can go astray, therefore He provides two clashing, yet harmonizing, truths to meet these opposite errors!"

- To the man who is trying to get to heaven by his works - God says, "No!"
- To the man who is trying to get to heaven without *any* works - God says "No!"

Truth is like two hedges that define the road; or the two wings of a bird.

Human nature has a tendency to move in one of two opposite directions. God, knowing that, provides a medicine for either disorder.

The problem is: ***Will we trust God when He affirms a view of truth that runs counter to our understanding?***

Aren't we intellectually bias to believe that we can understand all truth? Will we trample on one of God's precious sayings, in our zeal to clarify another?

1. God Himself is pictured in Scripture as "ONE, and yet, as "THREE"
2. God's character is presented in Scripture as "IUST," and yet, as "MERCIFUL"
3. Jesus is shown as "GOD" and "MAN"
4. The Old Testament pictures Jesus as the coming King to reign on earth. The Jews fastened on these prophecies, when Jesus came in meekness and was crucified. Because they could not reconcile both, took what pleased them and rejected the opposite view. *They were blinded by their prejudice!*

Many today reject the fact that prophecies of Christ's return to reign literally on earth and say that "*These prophecies will never be literally fulfilled!*"

Take the subject of Divine Healing: On one side we have those who worship health as if it were a god and have overemphasized the needs of the physical body to the exclusion of the spiritual growth of the inner-man.

On the other hand, you have the other extreme of those who manifest a "*sickness attitude,*" believing that all sickness has spiritual value that Christians must pass through. They indulge in the luxury of *misery* and seem to worship agony, weakness and pain, believing that all illness has divine value.

Other Biblical could be sighted, such as:

- (1) The ordinances of the Church can be over emphasized, or neglected. Sad to say that some Biblical God-given ordinances have divided church throughout Church history.
- (2) The matter of how one is brought into the Church? Is it by God's Word, or by the preacher? A Scriptural could be made for either.
- (3) Worship can be extreme; either in reverence, or too lightheartedness.
- (4) The church service is made up for public meeting. Hebrews 10:25 states, "*Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together.* Yet, Christ commanded *private* prayer. He said, "*enter into your closet*"
- (5) Scripture teaches that the Church has one head, with one body, however it is composed of distinct, separate parts (local). "*Being many you are one!*"

"Unity in plurality"

God is unchangeable, yet He deals differently in different dispensations.

Most students seem to be one-sided and ignore all evidence against whatever view they may hold. But we cannot have the whole of truth unless the two parts of that truth become one.

The *Gate of Truth* is **ONE**; but it's post are **TWO**. When driving into the entrance we must beware of both sides and not steer so strenuously to one side or we will hit a post on the other side.

When riding a horse you have two reins in your hand. Don't pull too much on just one side, or your horse will end up in the ditch.