

“Ye Have Heard It Said”

No. 172

Introduction.

- I. The gospel of Matthew records the great Sermon on the Mount. Several times in this sermon Jesus called attention to something the people had heard in religion and then He would say, “You have heard it said, but I say unto you.”
- II. For our lesson let us consider some things we have heard in religion and then give what the Bible says on the matter.
 - I. **God Is Dead** - We have heard it said that God is dead.
 - A. In recent decades many people have boldly declared “God is dead.”
 1. By this statement it is meant the 21st century mind no longer finds God believable and God is dead in the minds of the people.
 2. In other words they do not believe God has ever really existed except in the mind of man.
 3. This is nothing but old atheism with a new twist.
 - B. Let’s consider some arguments for the existence of God.
 1. One major reason for belief in the existence of God is based on the well-known scientific principle that **something cannot come from nothing**.
 - a. Not even the atheist would take the absurd, preposterous stand that something come into existence from nothing. This means in simple language that something has always existed.
 - b. The question comes to every mind, “**What is this something?**” Is it God or is it matter?”
 - 1) We can answer this question by considering the **human mind**. Where did the mind of man come from? The atheist would have us believe that the highly complex mind evolved from non-thinking matter.
 - 2) Now I ask you is it reasonable to believe that the power to think has come from non-thinking matter? Is it not much more reasonable to believe that man’s mind has come from an Eternal Mind - God?
 2. A second major reason for belief in God’s existence is based on the **argument from arrangement**.
 - a. As one studies the arrangement of the human body and the universe, he cannot help but to see this arrangement had a Master Planner. Such exactness and precision could not have happened by blind chance as the atheist would have us believe. It takes more faith to believe all this is an accident than it does to believe in God.

b. Some years ago **Foy E. Wallace, Jr.** wrote a brief article entitled “Coincidence or Creation?”

“If you are in doubt about whether the earth “happened” by coincidence or was created by Divine will and power, consider the following facts about the earth, its atmosphere, and its relationship to the rest of the universe.

The rotation of the earth on its axis, for instance, is about 1,000 miles per hour at the equator. If it were 100 miles per hour instead, the days and nights would be ten times as long, the result of which would be the burning up of all vegetation each long day and the freezing of each surviving sprout each long night.

The sun, the source of light, has surface temperatures of 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit; the earth is far enough away for the right warmth, not too much, not too little. If the sun gave less radiation, the result would freeze us all; and if more, it would roast us all.

The slant of the earth is at an angle of 23 degrees, which gives seasons, and if not so tilted, the movement of the vapors of the sea would turn continents into ice.

If the moon were set at less distance from the earth, tides would submerge all continents twice daily, and the mountains would erode away.

If the crust of the earth were ten feet thicker, there would be no oxygen and all life would die.

If the atmosphere were thinner to the point of precision, meteors which hurl from their orbits and dart toward the earth and which now burn and consume in the atmosphere, would shoot to the ground and set fires over the whole earth.

All of this is proof that life was created, is governed by mathematical laws, and is not an accident.

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- b. **Once a manufacturer of meat choppers** said he had been told the precision of the universe all happened by chance. He said he did not know about that, but he did not that he could put the 17 parts of the meat chopper in a wash tub and toss them around for the next 17 billion years and he could not come forth with a meat chopper. Yet the atheist affirms that the precision of the billions of celestial bodies all happened by blind chance. How foolish! How hard to believe!
- c. **A young skeptic once said to an elderly lady**, “I once believed in God, but now, since studying philosophy and mathematics I am convinced that God is but an empty word.” The wise lady then admitted that she did not know much about mathematics or philosophy, but asked if he could tell her from whence the egg comes. He replied, “Of course, from a hen.” She asked, “Whence does the hen come from?” He

replied, "Why from an egg." The lady then asked what existed first - the hen or the egg. He said, "The hen, of course." She said, "Oh, then a hen must have existed without having come from an egg? He said "Oh, no, I should have said the egg was first." She said, "Then I suppose you mean that one egg existed without having come from a hen?" The young man hesitated and said, "Well, you see - that is - the hen came first." Seeing he was going in circles, the lady went on to say, "You can't explain the existence even of a hen or an egg without God, and yet you wish me to believe that you can explain the existence of the whole world without Him."

3. A third major reason for belief in God's existence is **prophecy**.

- a. In the Bible we find hundreds of prophecies that have been fulfilled. These prophecies were made hundreds, even thousands, of years before their fulfillment. These prophecies show without a shadow of doubt that God exists.
- b. Man can try to guess the future, but he cannot infallibly predict the future. Only men under the influence of God's Spirit can do so.
- c. **Fulfilled prophecy is overwhelming evidence for God.**

For these reasons and others that could be given, we can say as the psalmist did. (Psa. 14:1).

C. A **preacher** once said from the pulpit that he could prove to the satisfaction of any infidel within 10 minutes that he was a fool. The next day a man approached the preacher and challenged him to prove his statement. He said if he did not prove it he would expose him as a liar in the city papers. Seeing there was no way of reasoning with the man, the preacher said, "Where is your infidel?" The man said, "I claim to be one and I want you to know I am no fool either." The preacher said, "You don't mean to say there is no reality in Christianity?" "I do, sir. I have studied all phases of the subject, and have traveled and delivered lectures against Christianity for more than 12 years, and I am prepared to say there is nothing in it." The preacher said, "You are certain there is nothing in it?" "Yes, sir, there is nothing in it." The preacher said, "Will you please tell me if a man who will lecture 12 years against nothing is not a fool, what, in your judgment would constitute a fool?" The infidel turned away in a rage. He had been proven a fool. The preacher looked at his watch and only 4 minutes had past.

II. **A New Gospel For A New Age** - We have heard it said that we need a new gospel for a new age.

- A. Some assert that in our changing world there is no room an old-fashioned gospel. They state the gospel must be changed to fit the times.
- B. It is true we are living in a modern world.
 1. Every day numerous changes are made. Even though the world is changing we do not need a new gospel. The gospel is as up-to-date as today's newspapers. The gospel still answers the needs of 21st century man.
 2. Man needs and desires to be **saved**. The Bible tells man how to obtain this salvation. (Jn. 14:6). Man desires to be **happy**. The Bible reveals the secrets to happiness in life. (Psa. 1:1,2). Man needs **comfort and strength**. The Bible informs man how to satisfy this need. (Psa. 46:1). Man needs to get **along with his neighbor**. The Bible gives man the secret to this in The Golden Rule. (Matt. 7:12). Man yearns to know about **the after life**. The Bible tells man of the after life in Christ Jesus. (Jn. 11:25).
 3. An unknown author has written these words about the Bible.

The Bible Lives!

<p>Generation follows generation - yet it lives.</p> <p>Nations rise and fall - yet it lives.</p> <p>Kings, dictators, presidents come and go - yet it lives.</p> <p>Hated, despised, cursed - yet it lives.</p> <p>Doubted, suspected, criticized - yet it lives.</p> <p>Condemned by atheists - yet it lives.</p> <p>Scoffed at by scorners - yet it lives.</p> <p>Exaggerated by fanatics - yet it lives.</p> <p>Misconstrued and misstated - yet it lives.</p> <p>Ranted and raved about - yet it lives.</p> <p>It's inspiration denied - yet it. lives.</p> <p>Yet it lives - as a lamp to our feet.</p> <p>Yet it lives - as a light to our path.</p> <p>Yet it lives - a the gate to heaven</p>	<p>Yet it lives - as the standard for childhood.</p> <p>Yet it lives - as a guide for youth.</p> <p>Yet it lives - as inspiration for the matured.</p> <p>Yet it lives - as a comfort for the aged.</p> <p>Yet it lives - as food for the hungry.</p> <p>Yet it lives - as water for the thirsty.</p> <p>Yet it lives -as rest for the weary.</p> <p>Yet it lives - as light for the heathen.</p> <p>Yet it lives - as salvation for the sinner.</p> <p>Yet it lives - as grace for the Christian.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To know it is to love it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To love it is to accept it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To accept it means life eternal.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- Religious Digest</p>
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III. **Does Not Matter What One Believes Just So He Is Sincere** - We have heard it said that it does not matter what one believes just so he is sincere.

- A. **Is this statement true?** If it is true why does the Bible warn against being deceived by false teachers? (Matt. 7:15; 24:4; Jn. 8:32; Gal. 1:8; 1 Jn. 4:1).
- B. These verses and many others found in the New Testament force us to conclude that what a person believes does matter. Sincerity is important, but sincerity alone will not save a man.
1. Suppose a **sincere man is an atheist**, would the fact that he is sincere offset his denial of God? (Psa. 14:1).
 2. Suppose a **sincere person denies Christ as the Son of God**, will being sincere save him? (Jn. 3:36; 8:24).

IV. **An Eye For An Eye And A Tooth For A Tooth** - We have heard it said an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

A. By this statement it is meant that if someone does you wrong you have the perfect right to do him wrong.

B. **What did Jesus say on the matter?**

1. Matt. 5:38-45.
2. The attitude of the Christian toward evil is illustrated by an **instance in the life of Sir Walter Scott**. One day Sir Walter Scott threw a rock at a stray dog intending to shoo him away. He threw the rock straighter and harder than he intended and broke the dog's leg. Instead of the dog running away, he came limping up to Sir Walter and licked the hand that threw the rock. That dog preached the sermon on the Mount as few people have ever preached it.

V. **Faith Alone Will Save A Man** - We have heard it said faith alone will save a man.

A. Some teach that the very moment a man believes he is saved.

B. But what does the Bible say? Heb. 11:6; Matt. 7:21; Gal. 5:6; Jas. 2:17, 20, 26).

VI. **One Does Not Have To Be Baptized To Be Saved** - We have heard it said that one does not have to be baptized to be saved.

A. **This is a very popular belief.** In fact it is a belief that is only universally taught.

B. Did Jesus and His apostles teach this? (Jn. 3:5; Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 10:48; 1 Pet. 3:21).

Conclusion.

I. These scriptures all teach that one must be baptized to be saved. We are not saved by popular opinion, but by the truth of God revealed in the holy scriptures. According to the truth of God, one must accept Christ as God's Son and confess Him before men. One must turn from his sins and be baptized for the remission of sins.

II. **Salvation can be yours this very hour in Christ.** You can be saved by coming forward and confessing your faith in Christ and being baptized. Will you come and give your life to Jesus as we stand and sing His invitation?