

A
REPLY
TO
ARMINIANS

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A REPLY TO ARMINIANS

**“Millions and billions will die
lost and all the time we have the
power to save them if we will.”**

The above statement is made in the editorial of a current periodical. The statement involves an erroneous concept now generally believed and taught as gospel truth. Since the expressions made in this editorial are normal and fair representations of this pernicious teaching, we will use them merely as a basis for some brief observations touching the principle of divine truth.

This editor writes:

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“It is appalling to think that millions and billions now living will be in eternity just a hundred years from now. Over ninety nine percent of them will die lost. The march of most men from the cradle to the grave is a trail of tears. Their destiny is eternal ruin. And all the time we have the power to save them if we will.” end quote

Frankly, we experienced a little shaking in the pen in transcribing the last clause “and all the time we have the power to save them if we will”; but there it is. First, we have often wondered why, men who have their power to save souls yet do not always speak in terms of souls now living or yet to be born. What about the poor souls that have long since departed and as they say already burning in endless torment? Could it be that these soul-saving men do not have power to save, once souls have departed into the unknown regions of the dead? If so, then, in all seriousness and concern for such souls, we would urge these men to join the ranks of those men who have not power to forgive sin and save souls of the living but have power (for a sum) also to save souls even after they have missed their chance here and have gone into the lower regions of darkness. We repeat, we are serious about this whole matter, even though most of these men are not as we shall show.

We must not project our plans for so long a period as “one hundred years from now,” but take immediate steps to recover those departed souls. Then let every man and every woman, boy or girl, who has this power to save souls begin at once, yes, at this very moment because souls are dying every moment and let them not stop, day nor night except for a sandwich or a cold biscuit and just enough sleep to keep going, going, going. Keep going! Would you be so heartless, so cruel and unconcerned to stop for one moment when you could reach just one more soul and save him or her from “eternal ruin,” from an endless torment? What kind of a heart and soul do YOU have, that you can even consider such selfish action, much less to fritter away days and months and years satisfying your own flesh, spending your money to feed your own bellies and to build fine homes and expensive buildings you call “churches.”

We are not informed as to the source of information that there are “over ninety-nine per cent” of these billions of departing souls who will die lost, and whose “destiny is eternal ruin.” If such statements are correct we would like to have some substantiating authority for such a stupendous declaration! Yes indeed, whether or not these soul-saving men realize it, the very thought that not millions, not one billion but billions (!!!) of souls now, living will die LOST! And not only lost, but doomed to eternal ruin and torment! Men you men who “have the power to save them” all of these billions of poor dying souls how call you so lightly and coolly hand out such figures and such wild statements? If any of you

and we make no exception, if any man or woman really believed such to be the fact, you would not and should not stop long enough to tell it. You would be too busy using your power to save those perishing souls, and very properly so.

“And all the time we have THE POWER to SAVE them IF WE WILL.” What shall we say? that we are a bit surprised, amazed or astounded!!! flabbergasted!! or is there any word to express so utterly unbelievable, unthinkable a condition? Men, yes, men and women, thousands if not millions of them living in comfort and luxury blandly informing the rest of us that billions of souls are dying lost when they “have the power to save them if we will”! Are you actually saying that you have the power to save these souls from the wrath of Almighty God and from eternal ruin, and yet you are failing to do so? Can you possibly be making such a shameful and despicable admission? Tell us you men the world around who have this wonderful, amazing power to “save souls” from eternal ruin why, why, why! have you not done it? Why are you not NOW doing it, and WHY will you not do it in the next “hundred years”? Which one of you can stand up and say, I have done it, and am still doing it; I have denied myself every necessity of life, save food for bare existence; I have gone and am still going day and night, with only snatches of sleep, using my power to save souls. I have gone, and am still going, when my shoes had worn out and my bare feet bleeding, but I rejoice that I could save even one of those billions of souls that otherwise would have spent an endless eternity in a burning hell, had I failed to reach them, and I did just in time! Not one of you dead or living can say that, or anything approaching it.

You say this is “fanatical.” Now we know you are insincere. You call it fanatical to have the power to save a soul from eternal torment, for you to deny yourself only a few moments of comfort to your mortal life here and thereby let an “immortal soul” die lost for an eternity of pain? You say it is appalling to think of billions of souls dying lost, and yet you call it fanaticism to suggest no time, no efforts, no money should be lost to save them! Then you by such an answer indicate that your heart is harder than that of the lost souls you claim to have the power to save.

But now where did you get this “power to save” souls from eternal ruin? The Lord said, “I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore Mine own arm brought salvation unto Me.” (Isa. 63:5) The apostle Peter further declares: “Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby must [not possibly may] be saved.” (Acts 4:12) But we need not multiply scriptures with which you learned men especially are familiar, that there is but one Mediator between God and man the MAN CHRIST JESUS!

“Oh but” are we hearing you “soul-saving evangelists” saying: “We don’t mean that we save souls, but we bring them to Christ so He can save them, etc., etc.” Now, we shall not spend precious time with such God-dishonoring arguments as that. If you do not save souls why do you publish to the world that you do? If you do not have the power to save souls from eternal ruin, why do you claim such power? If you do not mean what you claim and boast of now that your presumption has been exposed, frame your words in any shape you please, defend your erroneous and unscriptural, anti-gospel teaching in any fashion you choose. When you have used your cleverest mind and your best logic, you will have ignored the Arm of God and assigned the arm of flesh as the final means of saving these billions of souls from eternal ruin.

Notwithstanding the fact that God loved and chose certain people in Christ before the world began, sent that Son into the world to make an efficacious absolutely effective sacrifice as a complete atonement for the specific sin and sins of that certain people, raised from the dead for their justification, and stands

NOW as their High Priest making intercession for them according to the holy, divine will of the Almighty Creator and sustainer of all things, but, and that is your “but,” notwithstanding all this and more, if you great and important men of earth who are really earth worms fail to get the information out, or bring these souls to Christ, or some way or somehow fill in a missing link between these billions of souls and a sin avenging God, alas, it will all have been in vain, and these billions of souls will finally be lost and go on into the eternal ruin to which you say they are “destined.” Here you used the wrong word, for if they were “destined,” then you had no power to save them even if you willed which you didn’t!

“Ninety-nine percent of billions of souls will die lost.” What should we call this pernicious teaching? It flatly contradicts the absolute and unqualified declaration of the Son of God: “My sheep hear MY voice, and I know them, and they follow ME: and I give unto them eternal life; AND THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH, neither shall anyone [or anything] pluck them out of MY HAND.” Are you listening? There is a little more: “And this is the Father’s will which has sent Me, that of ALL which He has given Me I should lose NOTHING, but should raise it up again at the last day.” “Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven that ONE of these little ones should perish.” (John 10:27-28; 6:40; Matt. 18:14)

From these clear statements of the Savior Himself we understand that not billions shall be lost, not millions, not thousands, not a hundred, nor a dozen, no not even ONE soul for whom Christ died will be lost. So then, of the millions, or as numbered in Rev. 7:9: “a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred’s, and people, and tongues” whom Christ redeemed and for whom He NOW prays not one shall be lost or be eternally ruined, for they are “clothed with white robes: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne and to the Lamb.”

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“In a garden still wet with the dews of creation He gathered together some dust and made man. In man alone God placed that spark of immortality we call a soul. . . . The soul is immortal. It is eternal. The very possession of a soul proclaims the fact that God has for man some more noble purpose than eternal silence in dreamless dust.

“Because of the sin the race was doomed to a wilderness wandering, in which famine and thirst and nakedness and pestilence and the sword all have taken their toll. For four thousand years his course was a hopeless trail. But because God was not willing that any should perish, He sent in the end of the ages His only begotten Son. . . .

“From a little hill outside Jerusalem Jesus ascended back to the right hand of God, bearing in His nail pierced hands the trophies of His triumph. His own blood had been offered as an atonement for the sins of the race. Following His ascension the twenty-four elders surrounding the throne of God were commanded to sing a new song, “Worthy art Thou to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation.” end quote.

Here we have outlined for us the popular concept of universal man, and God’s good intentions for this man, but which was not fully realized because of man’s refusal to cooperate. Let us first notice the very erroneous teaching that man was given an “immortal soul.” Here it is referred to as a “spark of immortality.” Again there is no authority given for the statement. The two words from which our word immortal is translated, means not corruptible or capable of being corrupted. In 1 Timothy 6:15-16:

“Which in His time He shall show who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who ONLY has immortality, dwelling in the light.” All other references to this word show that God alone possesses immortality and they to whom He gives it in the resurrection of the Redeemed. The word soul is variously and broadly used in the Scripture, and relates usually to the natural life of man. God said the soul that sins shall die; that which is immortal does not die.

The concept expressed by this editor is the general teaching of Christendom that God created Adam with the plan for all of his posterity to “live happily ever after”; but somehow the plan went amiss, and the Creator had to make some revisions. That He really meant to have a paradise for mankind universally, but after man ruined himself, God then set about to salvage it by sending His Son to atone for the sins of the whole Adamic “race,” as this writer puts it. God’s word does not say that. However, if God’s sacrifice did atone for the entire race of Adam, it failed in its purpose, since even now in the next hundred years billions will die lost; and this would represent only a very small number of the total lost from creation to the end of the world!

It is rather puzzling in view of this great loss, to read in this editorial that when Christ ascended to the right hand of God He bore in His nail pierced hands “the trophies of His triumph.” We can understand the General of an army returning from a battle with a few trophies, and although he had lost several thousands of his soldiers, yet supposedly was victorious over the enemy. But for God and His Son to go out to battle and lose several billion of His soldiers in the effort, somehow we just cannot believe God nor His Son would regard this as “his triumph.” In fact, we have every reason to believe both from our concept of God Himself as well as His Word, that He would have been very much disappointed had He lost even one of those who follow Him on white horses having their robes washed in His blood.

Then too, if He had lost any of His children we would be quite confused to read, “Yet it pleased the Lord to Bruise Him; He has put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.” (Isa. 53:10-11) When we sinful mortals see several men and women drowning, make an attempt to save them and return with less than all of them, we are certainly not “satisfied.” How much more would the Son of God Himself be very much dissatisfied, after descending into the lowest hell, separated from His God and Father, suffer the spit of filthy sinners, and then the shameful death on a cross and still come short of His goal, even the possibility of not saving even one, if these men who “have power to save them” also fail their part! Furthermore, His last words on the cross must have been a pitiful delusion when He cried out “It is finished.” Perhaps some of you soul-saving men can tell us just what He meant by that statement. No indeed, if this God-dishonoring Rome-inspired doctrine be true, He did not finish anything, nor did He ascend into Heaven with the trophies of His triumph. He either takes ALL of His trophies or NONE of them, and if He doesn’t take all of them into Heaven He doesn’t triumph!

With what glibness and irreverence do men speak to God and about God; what He “can’t do” unless we “let Him”; what He “wants,” and how “helpless” He is if He cannot get the cooperation of the so-called “free agency” and “free will” of sinful men. What a low concept do they have of the Supreme, Sovereign Creator who holds the universe in the palm of His hand!

According to this very human and ignoble concept of God and His work, we behold a most pathetic sight, when this God-man returns to the courts of Heaven. As He enters the portals we notice a droop in His body and a sadness in His face as He approaches the great throne. He hesitates a moment, and then with tear filled eyes looks up to His Father, and says, Here are a “few of the trophies I saved from those

lower regions; they are not nearly all the children You gave Me, but I did My best.” God the Father answers, Did I not send you into earth as My Mediator, to make full reconciliation for ALL the rebellious children which I gave You as an inheritance?

This noble Son, now with slumped shoulders and down-cast eyes, answers, “Yes, I did go to earth as a Savior; that was even My name. I offered up My body, which I felt was a sufficient atonement for their sins; I suffered the painful separation from You, My Father, agonized under Your terrible wrath You would have poured out on these people; I even rose again for their justification, and saw to it that not the least charge could ever be brought against them in Your Holy Court, by bearing all the penalties Myself. But alas, My Father, there were literally billions of them who remained in their rebellious state, and refused My salvation. I don’t understand it; I went to earth as a Savior to save, but did not save that is, but comparatively few of those You gave Me. And I fear I should have lost even them had they not fully cooperated with Me and accepted Me as their Savior. The rest of My blood-bought and blood-washed multitude, alas, My Father, have slipped into eternal ruin and torment!

I know You know how grieved I am and how utterly disappointed, but it seems both of us have failed somewhere. Another thing I must tell you, and it has made Me feel shabby and even dishonest. Just before I gave My spirit back to You and died on the cross to which they had nailed Me, I declared in a loud voice, “It is finished!” I know that many of those people who were familiar with the promises You had made to them and their fathers, were left with the impression that I kept those promises fully, and finished the work of salvation which You gave Me to do. I was sincere in what I said, and verily believed I had finished it. But alas, My Father, something terrible has gone wrong! To contemplate the whole situation is heart-rending; to think that You had chosen each one of this people in Me and that We had loved them from eternity, and how we planned that glorious and “more abundant life for them, that they might be with Me where I am” now, and behold My glory! What did I say? glory? Nay not glory now but shame!! Oh I realize that I did the work, and made the necessary payment for sin; but I see it now where we failed. Both of us overlooked a most essential provision to bring these children to glory, namely, effectual calling. If, We had done that I am sure O My Father, I would not have lost even ONE which you gave Me to save.

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“This blessed gospel is the universal heritage of the race. All nations are to be taught. In its proclamation there is to be observed neither national nor racial lines. The great commission is time-wide and world-wide. It is impossible but that thinking people feel the weight of that responsibility. Each individual must say with Paul. “Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.” end quote

The so-called evangelical sector of Christendom have erroneously represented what Christ gave to His disciples, as the “great commission” by which they understand this to be universal; that if this “offer” can be brought within range of the natural hearing, then those who accept the offer will be saved, and those who don’t will go to hell, etc. All this is a sad twisting and perverting of the real purpose of the true gospel and the instructions given to His disciples just before His ascension. Of course He did not give His instructions even to all His followers at that time, much less to all who should profess His name in the future.

Christ gave specific instructions to eleven men (Hebrews) who believed in Him as the promised Messiah. They still had neither the boldness nor the spirit to obey His instructions, but received this power soon after His ascension. These eleven Jews had no conception whatever that the good news of

the promised Messiah should ever be proclaimed among the nations of the Gentiles, which they called “the world.” Jesus, their Anointed Messiah, Himself commands His eleven Hebrew disciples now to go, not only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but into all the world and declare the evangel or the good news. Good news of what? Here is the crucial point that has developed the deplorable condition in Christendom and confused the thinking even of many saints.

Christ, the Redeemer and Head of His body the church, did not commission His eleven disciples with a “universal offer” of eternal salvation even to all Jews, much less to all men of all nations. But He did make it clear to them then, and again later to Paul, and in a vision to Peter, that He was to take out from among the Gentiles also “a people for His name,” and therefore this good news of an “elect,” “chosen,” “redeemed” people must also be preached or proclaimed throughout the whole world. The words of Caiaphas confirms this when he said to the members of the council: “You know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation [Israel] perish not. And this spoke he not of himself, but being, high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation. And not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.” (John 11:49-52) THIS was the evangel, the good news, the gospel that the SAVIOR of His people HAD COME; that He HAD made the one supreme “offering” that HAD forever “taken away the sins of His people”; that “THIS MAN HAD overcome death, hell and the grave”; that He HAD “led captivity captive” and that He DID bear in His nail-pierced hands ALL the trophies of His triumph “into Heaven itself”; that He NOW intercedes “not for the world” but for ALL for whom He died and rose; even for all “the Father gave Him.” THIS is the gospel referred to when he said, “Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.” THIS is the good news proclaimed by the apostles and by every God-called man since the apostles.

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The Editorial continues-

“Today, a messenger of the Lord will land, unheralded and unnoticed upon a continent, or an island in the sea, [he refers here to the modern so-called soul-saving missionary] Where the pure gospel is unknown, and teeming thousands will go about their work, never realizing that a stranger has come among them. He will probably begin as Paul began, with a very simple and humble audience. The world will hardly note his presence. It will not realize that it is the recipient of an unusual blessing. Yet, a little group of disciples will be formed. The church grows, and a few of the millions who might have died lost will be saved.

“Every gospel preacher ought to do some work where the gospel is completely unknown. Every congregation should engage itself in at least some effort to get the gospel to those who have never had a chance to hear it. All of us ought to build something beside what we build upon another man’s foundation. It may not be necessary for every congregation and every preacher to spend their entire energies doing it, but it is certainly apostolic for them to spend a good portion of their time preaching where the gospel has never gone. If churches don’t “send” their preachers out, the preachers should go ‘unsent.’ There is no need for both to go to hell.

“Preachers ought to declare a ‘declaration of independence’ and do more preaching and less ‘pastoring.’ There are thousands of opportunities to preach the gospel where it has never been preached even here in our own country. Countless souls now living light here in America will die lost unless we get to them with the gospel.

“The thrill of saving souls has all but disappeared from the average congregation. We are too content to carry on a good program of work and to baptize the members! children as they reach the age of accountability. We must get the gospel out into the crossroads, the hamlets and the slums. We must preach it in the suburbs and in the inner city, for after all, it is the hope of the world.” end quote

The commission or instructions given to the eleven Hebrew disciples, was not to preach the gospel as a means of saving souls from eternal ruin, but rather as already noted to proclaim the evangel or good news that the Messiah had now come, and redeemed or saved, not only the children of God among the nation of Israel, but also in the world or Gentile nations.

There is no intimation by either the Lord or any of His apostles that it was the work of apostles, or the church, by their preaching or by any other means, to save sinners from eternal ruin. They were instructed and exhorted many times to call out by their preaching and teaching those whom God had chosen in Christ, namely, “the children of God.” The erroneous and now popular teaching is that Christ died or atoned for the sins of the human race for every human being that has been or shall be born; however this atonement will not be effective or save anyone unless they “apply it,” that is “accept it” or “accept Christ and His offer” of this atonement. The amazing thing is that there is not one shred of scripture to sustain this pernicious idea, but much to the contrary. It is freely admitted and even preached, that God and Christ have “done all they can,” and now the case rests wholly with the sinner whether he will be saved and go to Heaven or Hell; he makes the final decision in the whole matter; “God is helpless” to save the sinner unless he will “meet the conditions.” Such a teaching obviously reflects on God’s ability and purpose to save, and is blasphemous in all its implications.

From the paragraph just quoted from this editorial, the evangelist or missionary is represented as a “messenger of the Lord” landing in a country of “teeming thousands” “where the pure gospel is unknown.” It is of course understood that this “pure gospel” must be brought to these heathen only by human agency. The Almighty God could create a universe, His Son had “power over all flesh,” the Holy Spirit has power to blow where He pleases, etc., but, according to this false idea, They cannot do a thing until the evangelist, “soul-saving missionary” or even a tract gets there!

But now comes the big let down. We are informed that this “messenger of the Lord” does not get the ear of these “teeming thousands” so they will hear with their natural ears the “gospel offer” and have a “chance” to be eternally saved, but instead only “a few of the millions who might have died lost will be saved.” This is admission of a miserable failure on the part of this whole modern soul-saving machinery. They have a commission from the Redeemer Himself to save these millions, and yet they admit to saving only “a few”! And this failure is attributed to the lack of sufficient zeal, men and money!

But notice we have still another big let down. This editor says “every gospel preacher ought to do some work,” etc. A “messenger of the Lord” who has “the power to save” these “teeming thousands” is told that he “ought to do some work” in this field where billions of souls are dying LOST! “It may not be necessary for EVERY preacher to spend his entire energies doing it.” No doubt that would be asking too much of these “reverend” messengers of the Lord to spend ALL of their time, energies and money, saving souls from eternal ruin and torment. They must have their rest and vacations time to arrange their programs, etc.! But, come to think of it, after all, “it is certainly apostolic” to spend a good portion of their time in an attempt to save at least “a few” of these billions who will die lost “unless we get to them with the gospel.” There are even countless souls right here in America “who will die lost unless

we get to them with the gospel.” You must not worry too much about these poor souls, since ninety-nine percent of them are destined to eternal ruin! But then we might “both go to hell” if we thus fail!

“We must get the gospel out into the crossroads, the hamlets and the slums. We must preach it in the slums. We must preach it in the suburbs and in the city, for after all, it is the hope of the world.” This well meaning editor says we must do this, but they don’t do it, and will not do it. Now they are confronted with “population explosion” which these soul-saving men have stated that at the present rate of increase, and at their present rate of reaching these souls, it will be impossible for them to ever get the gospel to but a small fraction of these billions dying lost! They may however take care of the critical condition by not attempting to “save individuals,” but scoop them up in whole “nations and societies”! This is called “mass evangelism” Billy Graham style.

“It is the hope of the world.” Every soul-saving evangelist from Billy Graham down is preaching the gospel as the “hope of the world.” For all the evils in the world they paint on their sign boards that “Christ is the Answer,” etc. We don’t find any ideas like this in the Bible, but we do read of some fearful judgments already pronounced upon the nations of earth. A real messenger of the Lord told Daniel, “the wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand.” And we are told “there is no hope for the wicked.” If God purposed this gospel to be the “hope of the world,” it has been a miserable failure. But we remember He speaks by Paul of Christ being the hope of Israel, and all those who “have hope of His righteousness” and who “love His appearing.” We are promised that NONE of these “shall be ashamed” at His appearing! For these and these only is the gospel their only hope.

We have a standing challenge for anyone to show, in either the Old or New Testament, one place where God has OFFERED eternal life or eternal salvation to anyone; also one place that even intimates that one soul for whom Christ died shall suffer eternal ruin or torment, or where God has left the eternal destiny of even one of the redeemed with any human agency whatever. Please do not flood the mails with your private interpretations concerning such a vital matter as one’s eternal destiny. God has spoken plainly enough to be understood without interpretations. Read our challenge again carefully before you attempt a reply.

By W. J. Berry,
Editorial from the Old Faith Contender