

Please Remember To Pray For The Sick!

Gaddy Wayne & Linda Hall
Wid & Barb Fleming
Hazel
Yvonne
Elinda Meade (Family)
Jessica & David
Shirly
Rachael Shepherd
Rhonda Holbrook
Jean & Billy Adkins
Eddie Davis
Larry Sparks
John Wayne Stewart
Gideon & Linda Ison

Clifford Fields
Sheila Seavers
Hillard & Carma Bates
Cammie Hutchinson
Ralph Napier
Jessica Jent
Nancy Collins
Jessica Newman (Baby)
Kevin Day
Caroline
Paul & Leonard Fleming
Sheilla Tolliver
Phillip Wright



Is Christianity a Parasocial Relationship?

I had never heard of the term “parasocial” until this week. I saw it when I read someone’s opinion that Christianity is the ultimate parasocial relationship. Naturally, I had to find out what this meant.

A parasocial relationship is a one-sided, unreciprocated connection one person feels toward someone else who is unaware of his existence. This is the kind of connection some people feel toward celebrities, media personalities, and sometimes even fictional characters. It is as if they know them personally, although there is no personal relationship between them.

So then, to say that Christianity is a parasocial relationship is to say that Christians have a one-sided connection with Jesus Christ. This description frames Jesus as a deity who has no regard for us, a mere man who died a long time ago and never knew any of us, or a complete fraud and an invention of man’s imagination. If Christianity is a parasocial relationship, then those of us who are Christians have placed all our faith, trust, hope, and affection in someone who doesn’t know we exist, doesn’t care we exist, or perhaps doesn’t exist himself.

Why would anyone suggest such an idea? A skeptic would say that there is no evidence of God or the Son of God reciprocating our affection. He would say that we pray and hear nothing in response, worship and receive nothing in return, and hope for an outcome that has never happened.

How should we answer? Well, it isn’t true that there is no evidence of God’s love for us, for that evidence abounds in the created world and in the gospel of Jesus. However, let us focus on the crux of the issue, which is faith. “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1). We “look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2Cor. 4:18). We “walk by faith, not by sight” (2Cor. 5:7).

Ultimately, we expect not for the great and final reciprocation of our faith in God to be here and now but later when Jesus returns. Peter says that “the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls” (1Pet. 1:7-9).

Thus, Christianity is not a parasocial relationship. It is faith, hope, and love toward the living God who so loves us that He gave His only begotten Son so that we can live with Him forever. There is no better relationship than that.

Stacev E. Durham

Gods Plan Of Salvation

Hear, Romans 10:17, Believe, John-8:24, Repent, Luke 13:3, Confess, Romans-10:9-10, Baptism, Acts 2:38, Remain Faithful, Revelation 2:10

seeking Truth



Southend Church of Christ,
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Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Study 10:00AM
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 AM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study 6:00 PM
Everyone is Welcome To Attend!

Predestination and Choice

By : Jay Dixon

In Ephesians 1:7, Paul speaks of the beloved, Jesus Christ, in whom we have redemption. In Christ, we find redemption. The soul of man needs rescuing from the bondage of sin. Through the blood of Christ, there is restoration, recovery, and deliverance for the soul. Through the blood of Jesus, redemption brought the forgiveness of sins, a divinely preordained path of salvation rooted in the richness of His grace. "...wherein He has bestowed upon us all wisdom and prudence..." Ephesians 1:8. This was no coincidence or afterthought; it was a deliberate plan from the mind of our Creator, carried out with perfect wisdom and intention. Every aspect of this grace-filled plan reflects God's supreme intelligence to ensure salvation for humanity's future.

God entrusted the work of proclaiming His wisdom to the Apostles under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Paul writes in Ephesians 1:9 that God has revealed to us the mystery of His will. In Ephesians 3:2-5, he references earlier writings that point to this mystery, once hidden but now uncovered by the Holy Spirit to the apostles and prophets. This revelation enables everyone to have knowledge of God's eternal plan of redemption. Further in Ephesians 1:9-10, Paul explains that, in the fullness of time, God will unite all things in Christ, both in heaven and on earth. In Ephesians 3:6-11, Paul explains how Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and participants in the promise through Christ and the Gospel. The church is called to grasp the vast wisdom of God, which goes beyond human understanding. This wisdom originates from God's mind and fits perfectly with His eternal plan, accomplished through Christ Jesus our Lord. Out of His good pleasure and will, God has included the Gentiles as part of the church, His body.

"In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory."
Ephesians 1:11-12

The Jews were not predestined to receive this inheritance simply because they were God's chosen people, they had a responsibility to trust in Christ, making a decision to rely on Him for salvation.

Paul speaks to the Gentile converts in a similar way, Ephesians 1:13. In whom you also trusted, in whom you also placed your hope, trust, and reliance on Jesus Christ. When? Not because they were predestined and forced, but after hearing the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit... V14, ...which is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

We have the freedom to choose salvation. Individuals are not predestined to salvation or damnation without any choice of their own. The Grace of GOD provides man with a choice. Paul teaches that Jew and Gentile are fellow heirs of the promise. This unity is based on obedience. Paul teaches that Jews must trust in Christ and circumcise their hearts. For the Gentile the availability of salvation was not a guarantee of it; they, too, must trust in Christ and obey the Gospel. Salvation is available to all, but each person must make their own choice. Those predestined for salvation are those who trust in the saving work of Christ, responding accordingly to the conditions set forth by GOD.