

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Will Your Theology Save You?

(Jerry Fite)

Picture a group of academics assembled with prepared papers in hand to discuss various theologies. They contrast Catholic Theology from Protestant Theology, offering pros and cons of each. At the end of the day they depart having been educated in theology. But did their day long exercise have eternal consequences?

Many, including these same academics, would quickly remind you that “your theology will not save you!” It is “like a sign pointing the direction to the city...pity the person who thinks the sign is the city.” Theology is “the study of God” and “His relationship with the world.” The theological academics acknowledge “Theology” as the sign post directing you to God. But at the end of the day, God Himself, not the various theological beliefs, saves you.

Let us exercise ourselves in a little “theology.” God challenges us to know Him as “*I Am*” (*Exodus 3:14*). God reveals Himself verbally to Moses to be understood rationally by Israel. Theologically, God was not the fire in the burning bush, but the great “*I Am*.” The complete concept was, “*I Am That I Am*.” God

is revealing Himself as “self-existent.” He is the *personal* God who does not depend upon any other being or thing for His existence. He is the *eternal* God for He is always “*I Am*.”

The Son of God came into this world in fashion as a man with flesh and blood (*Philippians 2:8, Hebrews 2:14*). But Jesus wanted us to know Him more than mere man, but as He is: Deity. Jesus said, “...*ye shall die in your sins: for except ye believe that I am (He), ye shall die in your sins*” (*John 8:24*). We know Jesus was claiming His eternal existence as God because later in this same chapter Jesus says, “*Verily, verily I say unto you, Before Abraham was born, I Am*” (*John 8:58*). Notice Jesus did not say, “*I was*,” but as the self-existent, eternal “*I Am*.”

We are not looking into the heavens to know God as our Creator, we are reading His Word which reveals Himself to our minds. Theologically, we know God as the self-existent “*I Am*”, and Jesus as the eternal “*I Am*.”

Does this knowledge have anything to do with our salvation? Jesus unequivocally says unless we believe He is eternal Deity, we

will die in our sins. The theology of God and His Son as being “*I Am*” is essential in having saving faith.

What is “your theology” regarding Jesus’ resurrection? Was He raised “bodily” from the grave and ascended “into heaven?” as revealed in the Gospels (*Matthew 28:7, Luke 24:38-42, 50*)? Or, is your theology regarding Jesus one that He was not raised from the dead, but the spirit of His teaching continues to live in the hearts of believers? Would our day of comparing papers in an academic setting end without “salvation” consequences? Paul reveals that we must believe Jesus was raised bodily from the dead if we are to be saved from our sins (*Romans 10:9, I Corinthians 15*).

Believing in the Deity of Jesus Christ and His bodily resurrection is essential to our salvation through the Gospel message. We must know God and obey the Gospel if we are to be saved (*2 Thessalonians 1:8*). Knowing God is what “theology” is all about. If our theology leads us to believe a lie, we will perish (*2 Thessalonians 1:10-12*) We better have the “God – revealed Theology” found in His Word! It is a matter of salvation!