

How Many is Whosoever?
John R Gavazzoni

Very recently I received the following suggestion from a brother in Christ as part of a brief e-mail conversation we were having:

"John, in my sharing of the gospel of peace with ET Christians I find the toughest stumbling blocks for their spirit to take over the flesh belief is John 3:16, and Rom 10 :9 It always comes back to those two scriptures when they get alone with themselves. If the spirit ever leads you, maybe you could write an article on these 2 scriptures."

(Editorial

note: by "ET Christians," he means those who believe the doctrine of eternal torment.)

And so, it seemed good to me and the Holy Spirit to do so, so I submit the following exposition of the so-called golden verse of the Bible, John 3:16, to confirm the conviction of those who already have some understanding concerning the unqualified inclusivity of the saving grace of God in Christ , and to, hopefully, enlighten those in whose minds there still exists that vein of darkness and unbelief that seeks to limit what God has and will accomplish in His Son:

The most elementary rule of exegesis (critical explanation or interpretation, especially of scripture) is that any statement, verse, passage or even larger segment, must be interpreted in its context. Every student of scripture gives lip service to this rule, but in practice it is so very often ignored and/or violated with incredible impunity.

In the case of the scripture verse in question, most Christians utterly ignore the tonic chord that ties that gospel together, the clearly pervasive spirit of John's record, and the primary note sounded throughout its pages, thus opening themselves up to interpreting Jesus' statement discordantly.

Though many of the same Christians are aware of verses where this note is sounded, they fail to make the necessary connections that will allow scripture to explain scripture. Specifically, without taking into

consideration the general backdrop of the whole book, it is conventionally presumed that by saying, "whosoever," Jesus was limiting the number of those who would believe in Him, who would not perish, and who would have everlasting life. If they were to read and interpret in context, they would find, not limitation in His words, but underlined and emphasized inclusivity.

For example, if I, as the mayor of a city, knowing that every citizen of that city were certain eventually to claim a local tax refund once it was announced and understood by each one, I might assure them up front, that whosoever applies for the refund will in fact receive it. (Keep in mind now that in my analogy I know for a fact that everyone will end up disposed to accepting what is being proffered to them.)

In that case, "whosoever" would underline and emphasize that none will be excluded when they come forward (no pun intended). "Whosoever" gives force to the fact that the refund is for everyone. The intended effect would be to discourage anyone from thinking that, for any reason, they might be disqualified from receiving the refund.

Does my analogy fit John's gospel. It most certainly does! How emphatic Jesus is as recorded in the 12 chapter, vs 32; "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John adds his editorial note in the next verse, explaining that by "lifted up," Jesus was speaking of the manner of His death. The only condition for being drawn to Christ is that Christ be lifted up from the earth in crucifixion.

Come on now, yield to the force and clarity of the words of Jesus. His being lifted up from the earth on the cross would have the drawing power to, and in fact would, bring all men to Himself. Some reading this know that the Greek word translated "draw" in the KJV has the force of "drag."

In the progression of this gospel record, right up front, assurance is given that there will be none of those so drawn who will be disqualified. Among the all drawn, it does not matter, the down-and-out sinner or the Pharisee, the Torah-illiterate or the scribe, the religiously disenfranchised or the Sadducee, Jew or Gentile,

WHOSOEVER, WHOSOEVER, WHOSOEVER, GLORY TO GOD,
shall not perish but have everlasting life.

The Lord Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the Way to the Father (Jn.14:6) and said that no one could come to Him unless the Father draws that one (Jn. 6:44), and I have already shown that all will be so drawn (Jn.

12:32), and, oh blessed promise in Jn. 6:37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

One literal translation of "no wise cast out", renders it as, "under no circumstances be casting out." Another literal rendering has it, "never, no never, no never cast out." There is no need to prove, but only point out that "come to me" is a metaphor for believing in Christ.

Make the connections, you students of scripture. Let scripture explain scripture. What we have in this gospel, beginning in the prologue, is the eternal Word, the Son of God, the Christ, becoming flesh and dwelling among us, In Him was life and the life was the light of men. This light, according to verse 9, of the 1st chapter, "was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." He "lighteth every man." That's an ongoing enlightening. That's why the Concordant version translates it as " which is enlightening every man--coming into the world."

This Christ/Word is the light of the world. He IS the light of the world. If He does not end up enlightening the whole world, then He is not the light of the world. He is---also according to this same gospel---"The Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world." (1:29) If He doesn't take away the world's sin, then He is not the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world. He "taketh away;" that's ongoing. That's why the Concordant version has it as, "...which is taking away the sin of the world." That's what He's doing, and that's what He will fully do.

I can imagine about this time that if some reader is finding his mind being troubled by the Spirit of Truth, that, because of a blatantly erroneous pre-supposition, he or she is trying to figure out how Christ will save everyone since obviously millions die without ever having

come to Christ. They are betwixt and between because they have bought into the lie that God's salvific overtures to men cease at the point of their physical death.

Hey, hey----wake up! Haven't you ever questioned that assumption? Where did that idea come from? It certainly doesn't come from the Bible. Oh, I know, you'll shoot from the hip and quote "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Yes, it does say that. It says, after this "the judgment." It doesn't say, "after this eternal roasting in hell."

After this the judgment. What is the judgment? The judgment is that "there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we MUST be saved." That's God's judgment. You MUST be saved. Non-negotiable. If you haven't been drawn to Christ on this side of the veil, that's what you'll face on the other side. You'll face the inescapable, that "God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

You say, "but some people refuse the will of God." Some people TRY to refuse the will of God, and ultimately find that rebellion is the ultimate exercise in futility. The prophet, Isaiah, recorded God's magnificently sovereign pronouncement, "I will do all my good pleasure."

Now if you find yourself trying to figure out a way to prove that sending billions of people to suffer endlessly in hell, is God's good pleasure, then, my friend you are in the grip of a demonic delusion.

Don't go running to hide in the opinion of your pastor whose allegiance is divided between the truth and man's tradition, or some evangelist who has more testosterone than brains, or some prophet who knows not of what spirit he is. If they deny the universality of the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, they are WRONG, plain and simple, WRONG.

I have nothing of which to boast for I was wrong for years until that blessed day when the Spirit of Truth confronted me with the terrible mixture of gospel and superstition I'd been preaching. I came to a place of repentance by the grace of God, and that repentance

included believing in the light as greater than the darkness, where before, I believed that the darkness would eternally overcome the light in the lives of billions for all eternity.

I don't think it is necessary for me to address Rom:10:9, because the same principles that apply to John 3:16, apply to the Romans passage.

God's faithfulness will prevail over man's unbelief and all men, each in their own order, shall know and believe that Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree. It is not that He will bear our sins if we believe; it is that He has borne our sins, and the force of that truth shall bring us to faith.

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