

**DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD?****WDXE – January 1, 2012**

Do you believe in God? There are evidences of God's existence everywhere you turn. One of my Russian friends is a mountain climber. He said that he first began to believe in God on top of a mountain he had climbed. In recent times we have all been amazed by pictures of deep space taken by the Hubble space telescope. Truly, the scripture is correct that says, "The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork."

Hello I'm Larry Murdock. I preach for the Gandy church of Christ. Good morning and welcome to this program.

The heavens and the earth are the creation of the Almighty God. The first verse of the Bible declares, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1.) Do you believe in God? If you believe in God then you will also be interested in learning that God has spoken! What was God's purpose in creating humans? What is His purpose for you? What does God want? Does God have a claim on you? Does He have any news for you? Through whom does He speak? Who is His spokesman?

God did not wait until our day to speak. After the creation God began immediately to interact with His human creation. The Bible is a record of that interaction. When mankind became disobedient to God, the close communion between mankind and God ended and mankind became alienated from God. God gave his created children freedom to choose obedience or disobedience. Evil was created by Satan. And through Satan's lies mankind was deceived into thinking that God Himself was wrong in requiring certain behavior. Many of you who are listening may still believe that God is wrong in commanding humans to follow a particular moral code! You think God should not condemn anyone for believing and practicing something contrary to God's will! In fact, many of you may scoff at God's will for you. Today, you have the freedom to believe what you want to believe, and to practice what you want to practice, but beware, God will hold you accountable for your faith and for your actions! God insists on having a Judgment

Day in which the whole creation will give an account of its faith and behavior, whether good or evil. God will give an inheritance to those who follow His lead.

You may challenge me and say, “Preacher, how do you know all of this?” I know these things the same way you can know them. I have no special avenue to God. But I have heard what God has spoken through His spokesmen, the prophets. And I accept them to be true. I believe in God and His Word the Bible.

God is eternal. But He has broken into the world that He created! God is our past, but He is also our future. He is eternal. Human life is circular only in that we have come from God and we will return to God. Reincarnation into another fleshly form is not what God has revealed. Through His spokesman, God tells us what happened in the beginning. “Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living soul.” (Genesis 2:7 ESV.) The “breath of life” is the spirit given by God to energize the human body. That spirit is the part of a human that is made in the image of God. As it is written, “So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Genesis 1:27 ESV.) That which is made in the image of God is eternal. That which is of the dust will return to the dust. The human spirit given by God is eternal, just like God is eternal. Males and females were given the power to reproduce human spirits clothed in flesh. God told them “Be fruitful and multiply.”

Because of sin God separated mankind from the tree of life that could have sustained the fleshly body indefinitely. Now, the fleshly body can only sustain the spirit for a few years, the spirit then flies away to a reserved place. Even as Moses wrote in a song, “The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.” (Psalm 90:10 ESV.) Those who have been obedient to God have a special place that God has reserved. Jesus’ apostle Peter refers to that place when he wrote, “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:3-5.)

If this incorruptible and undefiled place is reserved for those who are obedient to God, then how can you become obedient to God? There is only one way to become obedient to God. You must believe in God and His Word. Did you notice what Peter said? Heaven is “reserved for you who are kept by the power of God through faith”! The Bible says that “without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6.) Since we cannot see God with the naked eye, we must see through the eyes of Faith. Faith is the only way to span the gap between earth and heaven.

Jesus was speaking one day to some unbelieving people when he said, “Unless you believe that I am he, you shall die in your sins.” (John 8:24 ESV.) This recorded conversation between Jesus and those unbelievers is a very interesting conversation. Jesus began the exchange by saying, **"I am going away, and you will seek me, and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come."** So the [unbelieving] Jews said among themselves, "Will he kill himself, since he says, **'Where I am going, you cannot come'?**" But Jesus replied, **"You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins."** You see, friends, Jesus can no longer be seen with the naked eye in this world. We are of this world; Jesus is not of this world and is no longer in this world. Therefore, faith is the only way to span the gap between this world and the world where Jesus and God His Father lives. Those unbelieving people then asked Jesus, “who are you?” Jesus replied **"Just what I have been telling you from the beginning. I have much to say about you and much to judge, but he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him."** They did not understand that he had been speaking to them about the Father.” (You can read this conversation in John 8:21-27.)

Yes, Jesus had much to tell the world about what He had heard from God, His heavenly Father. And friends, this is the way you can learn from the Father. You can read what Jesus and His apostles had to say about you and your sins. You can read what Jesus and His apostles tell you to do about your sins. This information is available to you in the Bible. Go to the source; go to the Word of God for the information that leads you to faith. The Bible says that “faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17.) Will you listen to the words of God, your creator?

The word of God is often called the “word of truth.” God’s word is “true” because they tell us what is real. Lies tell us what is not real. If we believe a lie, our faith does not make it real. But if we believe the truth then we will follow that which is real. Jesus’ apostle Paul once said this to his young friend Timothy, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15 ESV.) God approves of the person who is not ashamed of believing and following the word of truth. But notice that Timothy was encouraged to “rightly handle the word of truth.” The word of truth can be handled incorrectly! That’s right! In another place the apostle Peter said that the scripture could be twisted by those who are ignorant and unstable. (2 Peter 3:16.) Knowledge of God’s word and stability comes through study. We must do our best. We must bring our minds to the word of God and read widely. Do not latch onto one verse and ignore all the verses around it. You see, a verse of scripture only makes sense when it is understood within its context.

The same can be said of your word or mine. Has anyone ever twisted your words? Have your words ever been taken out of context? Have you been misunderstood because the other person did not listen to all that you had to say? This is the way some people treat the word of God. They do not listen all the way through. Therefore, these people’s faith is faulty. They may believe things that God never intended them to believe. Why? Because they have not listened all the way through. It takes diligence and determination to pursue a knowledge of God. But above all, it takes faith in God’s word. Truly, “without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that comes to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.” (Hebrews 11:6.)

Do you believe in God? Do you believe that He has revealed Himself through His Word?

Why not resolve to become a better student of God’s Word in 2012?