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Can Everyone Answer the Gospel Call?

John 3:17: (NASB) *For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him.*

We are blessed - truly blessed - to know Christ and to have the opportunity for salvation before us. In light of this blessing that is claimed by Christians, some have raised the question: If you (Christians) have this blessing and path to God's favor while the vast majority of the world's population does not, then isn't that saying that your God is not an equal opportunity employer? Is that a fair God? Is their question legitimate?

Some say the "Good News" is for everyone

Acts 17:29-31: It sounds like all men everywhere are invited and that invitation is for right now.

Matthew 16:24-27: (NASB) ²⁴Then Jesus said to His disciples, *If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.* ²⁵For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. (Again, sounds like anyone who wants to can jump right in!) ²⁶For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ²⁷For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of his Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds.

John 3:17: The last Scripture said there would be a judgment that would repay every man according to his deeds, but this says Jesus did not come to judge. How do we harmonize this?

Matthew 18:11-14: This is another text that seems to show the idea that God wants everyone to be included. But not only has everyone *not* answered the gospel call, but the vast majority of people are not even interested in what the gospel call might have to say.

Does God have a "Do Not Call" registry? If so, who is on it? Are they doomed?



YES! We believe God actually does have a "Do Not Call" registry!

For those He does call: **Ephesians 5:1-5:** Christianity is "come as you are," but it is not "stay as you are." You need to chisel away everything else and develop a Christ-like love.

For those He does not call: **Mark 4:10-20:** (NASB) ¹⁰As soon as he was alone, his followers, along with the twelve, began asking him about the parables. ¹¹And he was saying to them, *To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables, ¹²so that while seeing, they may see and not perceive, and while hearing, they may hear and not understand, otherwise they might return and be forgiven.* ¹³And he said to them, *do you not understand this parable? How will you understand all the parables?* ¹⁴The sower sows the word. ¹⁵These are **the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown**; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word, which has been sown in them. ¹⁶In a similar way these are **the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky places**, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; ¹⁷and they have no firm root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away. ¹⁸And others are **the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns**; these are the ones who have heard the word, ¹⁹but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. ²⁰And those are **the ones on whom seed was sown on the good soil**; and they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.

Three out of four of these seed examples are Jesus stating his purpose is to leave his listeners in an unconverted and sinful state! Why would Jesus do that if he came to save the whole world?

Let's look at the Matthew rendering of the parable: **Matthew 13:19:** (NRSV) *When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not **understand <4920>** it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path.*

Understand: Strongs #4920 suniemi; to put together, i.e. (mentally) to comprehend; by implication, to act piously.



If now was the only time for God's call to salvation, then why does a simple lack of understanding of the word give Satan the ability to take it away? Would that be fair? Would Jesus allow that to happen? The answer is that this is not really the end of the story. They are on the "Do Not Call" list now, but what is the end result of being on that list? We will explore further as we go.

For those on the "Call" list: Ephesians 5:6-10: (NASB) ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. (Those on the "Do Not Call" list) ⁷Therefore do not be partakers with them; ⁸for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light ⁹for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth, ¹⁰trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

If you don't see Jesus when you look in the mirror, God needs to keep chiseling. The "Call" list is narrow because it is a difficult path.

Can both ways be right? Can God have salvation for ALL and yet have a "Do Not Call" List?

John 3:17-18: (KJV) ¹⁷For God sent not His Son into the world to **condemn <2919>** the world; but that the world through him might be saved. ¹⁸He that believeth on him is **<2919>** not **condemned <2919>**: but he that believeth not is **condemned <2919>** already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Many Christians may look at Verse 18 as a final judgment on those who reject Jesus, yet the word translated *condemn* really means something slightly different:

Condemn: Strongs #2919 krino; properly, to distinguish, i.e. decide (mentally or judicially); by implication, to try, condemn, punish: 1) to separate, put asunder, to pick out, select, choose 2) to approve, esteem, to prefer 3) to be of opinion, deem, think, to be of opinion 4) to determine, resolve, decree. 5) to judge

Jesus is not talking in terms of a final judgment but rather of a selection process or separating out.

1 Timothy 5:24-25: There is a scriptural principle laid out here showing that judgment for some precedes the Day of Judgment - the pathway of those on the "Call" list.

There are different times when judgment is appropriate. We are suggesting that the Day of Judgment is for the judging of the vast majority, but that prior to the Day of Judgment is for the "pre-judgment" of the Christian right now.

This next text shows the marked difference between judgment and condemnation:

Luke 6:37: (KJV) **Judge <2919>** not, and ye shall not be **judged <2919>**: **condemn <2613>** not, and ye shall **<2613>** not be **condemned <2613>**: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

Condemn: Strongs #2613 katadikazo; to judge against, i.e. pronounce guilty

Condemn here means to *pronounce*. There is a pronouncement versus a separating process. Jesus came into the world not to pronounce guilt but to save it. The pronouncement of guilt comes later in the Day of Judgment.

Matthew 12:34-37: (NRSV) ³⁴You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks...³⁶I tell you, on the day of judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter; ³⁷for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be **condemned <2613>**.

Jesus is addressing the Pharisees. They are obviously going to be judged on Judgment Day, even though they were judged unworthy at the time Jesus was speaking to them. The difference? The first judgment was not eternal; their failure placed them in the category of needing the second judgment. The things we do today are not forgotten by God. No one "gets away with" anything.

One other quick look at this judgment/condemnation idea: John 5:27-30: (KJV) ²⁷And hath given him authority to execute **judgment <2920>** also, because he is the Son of man. ²⁸Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, ²⁹and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of **damnation <2920>**. ³⁰I can of mine own self do



nothing: as I hear, I judge, <2919>: and my judgment <2920> is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

Note how the King James Version translates the exact same Greek word as *judgment* but then also as *damnation*.

Damnation/judgment: Strongs #2920 krisis (kree'-sis); decision (subjectively or objectively, for or against); by extension, a tribunal; by implication, justice (especially, divine law):

AV-judgment 41, damnation 3, accusation 2, condemnation 2

1) a separating, sundering, separation 1a) a trial, contest 2) selection

God does have a "Do Not Call" list. It is a big list that includes billions of people. He also has a "Call" list - those He is calling to walk after Jesus with sacrificial lives. On the "Do Not Call" list is the "everybody else." But this is NOT a "Do Not Save" list. It is a "Save Later" list which happens on the Day of Judgment.

What do we know so far? God definitely has a plan.

On one hand He wants to save and bless all people: Genesis 22:18

On the other hand, God through Jesus is only calling a few to understand and follow: Mark 4:12

Those being called now are promised a heavenly reward if they are faithful.

Who is on the "Do Not Call" list? Those who died before Jesus' sacrifice, those who never heard about Jesus or valued his life; or who believe other religions, those who profess Christianity but don't follow through with a life of sacrifice, and those who have not been given the Holy Spirit. Remember, this is not a "Do Not Save" list; it just means "Save Later."

So, what do the lives of those following the call look like? Romans 8:14-23: There is something bigger and greater those on the "Call" list are striving towards. The rest of creation wants to be freed from the shackles of suffering. God is working out a big plan that includes everyone. We develop now and the rest of the world waits for us to finish!

Romans 8:28-30: This describes a process of development for those called and following after Jesus. **For those called, their whole future depends upon their present:** Romans 12:1-2

1 Corinthians 1:26-29: This shows humble growth in the wisdom and footsteps of Christ.

God loves, appreciates and blesses all goodness, especially those who are trying to live godly in this world.

So, how can the world be waiting for something they know nothing about?

The world NEEDS saving! Jesus himself tells us of a future for the "unrighteous," those who have not been called out.

Jesus saves the world in two stages; the true Christians first and the rest of the world second: John 5:28-29: The world continually attempts to right its own ship and the only ultimate result is that sin and death further their grip on everyone.

Acts 24:14-15: Jesus paid the price *without* the world's acceptance of him. The promise states ALL will be resurrected. How then is the Gospel applied?

Romans 2:5-9: This tells us there are degrees of righteousness of those who are not called out. Their deeds will be reflected in the resurrection time - the Day of Judgment. Those who do evil and harm will be exposed, too. Everyone will be accountable for what they do in this life. There is something good set up for those who are sacrificing now.

Romans 2:8-9; 2 Peter 2:9: *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment <2920> to be punished <2849>.*

(See the Bonus Material in the Full Edition Rewind for more on this, because the word here for *punish* actually means *to limit*.)

Psalms 9:8: So, the Gospel is relevant as a primary tool to show man sin and to show him the way to forgiveness through Christ. The individual lives and struggles of the called-out ones are the necessary turmoil for each one to become so much more than they are, for the purpose of blessing ALL! That is the glory of the plan of God!



1 Peter 2:9-12: It gives us a sense that there is something special about those on the Call list. They are lifted up not to play a harp on some cloud but for a very specific purpose.

So, does God have a "Resurrect Only" list along with His "Do Not Call" and "Call" lists?

Yes! Everyone on the "Do Not Call list" is on that list, but Jesus' followers are resurrected and blessed FIRST!

1 Timothy 4:10 Hebrews 2:9: How is this provable in scripture, that Jesus tasted death for everyone?

Daniel 2:44: This prophecy says there is something big that will happen. The kingdom of God will crush all other kingdoms, and the work of establishing this new kingdom is done through Jesus and his church - the called-out ones.

1 Peter 2:10: The called-out ones will help with the "all" - the "everybody else" who will unmistakably be on earth once they are resurrected. The Bible is filled with these promises!

Have we seen these things happen yet...?

Habakkuk 2:14

Psalms 22:27

Psalms 86:9

Isaiah 11:9

Zechariah 14:9

Revelation 11:15

Isaiah 65:21-25

There is an opportunity to restore what was lost - a perfect earth. Everyone cannot answer the Gospel call now, as it is to call out the few who are willing to make their lives like Christ's in a difficult environment. If faithful, they can be trusted with eternal and internal life so they can govern, with Christ and God, over all the nations of the earth who were paid for by the ransom of Jesus Christ.

Everyone gets the benefit of the ransom. Those who were called out get the benefit sooner, but everyone else gets the benefit later. The fact that everyone does not get called out now is not a problem but a blessing.

***So, can everyone answer the Gospel call?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!***