

# **The Futility of Mankind to Determine His Own Eternal Destiny**

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The Book of Acts 10:34-35

*Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that fears him, and works righteousness, is accepted with him.*

There are seventeen affiliated bodies in Australia<sup>1</sup> covering all of the main “religious” belief convocations. One of these is Christianity. Within just the broad Christian affiliation there are thirteen groups professing Christianity in various forms plus other unaffiliated small groups.<sup>2</sup> In population numbers, the demographic that professes to be Christian represents 52.1% of the total population of Australia - and based on that percentage from the 2016 ABS census, in today’s current population of 24.77 million people this calculates out to approximately 12.9 million souls. If we work these numbers backwards, we also have a population demographic of 11.87 million people who are not professing Christianity by their own declaration.

From a revenue disbursement perspective the Christian sector may rejoice over these numbers and settle into a strategic policy direction to undertake maintenance of what numbers they already have. In doing so, funding and resources would likely be re-directed toward (perhaps) welfare and community services, leaving aside evangelical initiatives to the contemporary super churches that are now enjoying record attendances.

Now if we step back in time we will be observing the Christian phenomenon referred to as Cathedralism. This is a term that, as it implies, refers to the rise of massive buildings, typically with accentuated naves and elongated spires that in times past were focal points, particularly throughout greater Europe, for various degrees of “Christian” outworking. Their popularity was transported around the globe as the world developed and they remained as a mainstay for Christian identity through the first two millennia of our Lord’s era of the common people.

We could debate the rights and wrongs of this overt display of financial waste in these massive constructions as it was often seen to occur in times when the general population was severely impoverished with very poor standards of living. More’s the pity that today we see these edifices crumbling and the “church” putting its hand out for money to support the maintenance that for centuries they ignored. However!

But times are changing and those institutionalised religious bodies that

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 (ABS)

<sup>2</sup> ABS 2016

promoted these vain edifices are retracting in attendance and struggle to understand why they have been subject to such dramatic decreases in congregant numbers. We could ask some interesting questions to tease out the reasons for these trends: Adult fall away, loss of appeal to children coming into Sunday School, decrease in church activities appealing to the youth, identifying why the Christian ethos and appeal has collapsed - amongst many other questions.

We should also have an understanding of why middle-aged people are not attracted to our churches – remembering that the trend from the millennium passed was for elevation of souls from Sunday school to youth groups to young adult groups and onto matured congregants who carried the body of the churches activities. We could ask what happened to collapse this tractor-feed of families. We could also ask about new believer registrations and support services for outreach activities to the lost, lame and blind<sup>3</sup>.

But in the end there is one other really big question – what have we done to our relationship with the Lord God of our Salvation whose sole (and soul) purpose for his advent into the earth was to implement God's Redemption Plan<sup>4</sup> for mankind? I am very sure all of this fall-away is not about the Lord or his untiring efforts to get his disciples to reach out to his fellow mankind. Without appearing to be sarcastic, didn't Jesus our Lord give his divine life for the benefit of mankind to be able to secure salvation of our souls? Would he ever step back and withdraw his effort? The question is rhetorical and to our shame should not need to be answered.

Well let's talk about mankind then. There is one indisputable truth that Peter, our brother in the Lord's Kingdom, who gushed forth the meaning of his epiphany<sup>5</sup> - God our Father is no respecter of birth rights, social status, wealth, power, political influencers, popularity, captains over industry, race, creed or even church membership one might attend. Everyone, that is all mankind, is bonded to sin through his flesh-and-blood carcass and there is no way here on Earth that this sin can be removed by man himself - no matter whom that mere man may think he is or what divinity he prostrates before.

From birth, mankind struggles to take breath, and from that point forward everything that he does and acquires throughout his entire life will be sifted by God at the time of death to remove everything (I literally mean everything) that is not of a renewed spirit of man under subjugation to the Holy Spirit of God. If

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<sup>3</sup> Matthew 11:5

<sup>4</sup> The Redemption Plan 2018 GW Rooke: Library at [ [www.faithchasers.net](http://www.faithchasers.net) ]

<sup>5</sup> Acts 10:34

our souls are not renewed back toward God through our Lord and Saviour, then even that will be disposed of – it is what is left after all has been thoroughly sifted through that we all should be intensely interested in.

There is a futility that we all have partaken of in our life time. Utter vanity that we should all be aware is valueless before our Judge on that great and terrible day that God Almighty will sit upon his great white throne and judge all of mankind.

Souls bare of any spiritual bonding to God's Holy Spirit, souls not in the Book of Life, souls not spoken for by the Salvation of the Lord, and, souls that have irretrievably lost their spirit through offences against the Holy Spirit; these are the epitome of a human life lived out in absolute futility. These are, in the main, the dead for whom we Christians should grieve because our commission is to the nations of the walking dead of this world and these we have collectively missed.

Many will struggle with this and many also will be totally astounded when it becomes obvious that God is no respecter of edificial buildings, clothes of gold and fine linen and head pieces of rich worldly significance. He is no respecter of office holders or memberships of convocations; he is no respecter of repressive systems of human subjugation in the name of "Christianity" and he is no respecter of welfare organisations and their community services where He is not glorified by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

So whether you are the richest person on the planet, the most powerful leader in the world, the highest self-esteemed religious figure - or a pauper; in God's view we are all the same. The sole purpose of our life here on planet Earth is to put ourselves into worshipping and serving God in his kingdom here today. Take heart if you look and see the grossness of the worldly rich and powerful in whatever form they appear – because walking with the Lord puts you at the peak of the highest mountain above these worldly icons.

A Christian's work is to bring the lost and dying sheep into the Kingdom and to keep their paths in life headed straight toward God until He redeems them. A Christian's service in this regard is also part of God's Redemption Plan for humankind and it will be rewarded – for this is also inclusive within the wonder of God's great plan to save man's soul.

Unlike the worldly who seek domination and subjugation in its many forms, the role model of our Lord to be the lowliest and base among men in a life of service to God is the way the Lord devised for us in his Redemption Plan.

Recall the beatitudes<sup>6</sup>? If we correctly dissect Matthew's Gospel account we read that the Lord separated the disciples away from the multitudes and gave them lesson 1.01 in how to be a Christian: So let's look what is being said. We can take these actual words of the Lord himself and apply them to ourselves personally. The Lord is speaking to us now!

Matthew 5:1-48

*And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain (away from the multitudes that were following him<sup>7</sup>): and when he was set, his disciples came unto him (just as we today go to the Lord to hear him in a quiet place away from the noise and hubbub of the world): And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,*

*Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*

*Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*

*Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*

*Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

*Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

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<sup>6</sup> Matthew Chapter 5

<sup>7</sup> Note that the Lord separated away from the multitudes. Paraphrase by Ed

*Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

*Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*

*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

*Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

*For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:*

*But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca<sup>8</sup>, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*

*Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;*

*Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

*Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.*

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<sup>8</sup> The word Raca is original to the Greek manuscript; however, it is not a Greek word. The most common view is that it is a reference to the Aramaic word reka, which literally means "empty one", but probably meant "empty headed," or "foolish."

*Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.*

*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:*

*But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

*And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.*

*And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.*

*It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:*

*But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.*

*Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:*

*But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:*

*Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.*

*Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.*

*But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.*

*Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:*

*But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*

*And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.*

*And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.*

*Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*

*Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.*

*But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;*

*That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

*For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?*

*And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?*

*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

The Lord has told us that “*in my father’s house there are many mansions*”<sup>9</sup> he also said “*Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.*”<sup>10</sup> And finally he said, “*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us*”<sup>11</sup>

Every day we see gross examples of mankind’s failing futility to be anything but what God put us on this planet for in the first place. That original purpose

<sup>9</sup> John 14:2

<sup>10</sup> 1Corinthians 9:24

<sup>11</sup> Hebrews 12:1

has not changed and neither has God's resolve to see his Redemption Plan fully implemented. So far that Plan has been (at best estimates by experts) thirteen billion years in the making and we still have a way to go yet. So it's not too late for any one individual or any one nation to repent and seek out the spiritual life-support the Lord our Saviour will give to all those who would believe in him and ask for help in keeping their souls afloat until the day of redemption.

However, rest assuredly that there is a time limit on humans to take up the Lord's words, and Paul's advice to us is very poignant. *"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"*<sup>12</sup>

The cut-off time is when we die. We don't reincarnate, we don't come "back" in some other form, and we don't get a second chance. Our earthly lives my friends, is the only chance we have to be taken to God's eternal heaven.

Some think they will be living life to the full until old age captures them – then they will seek God. But heed these words; no man knows the time of his death in advance. Only God has this knowledge.

Jesus said, *"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."*<sup>13</sup> *"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"*<sup>14</sup>

To answer the original question about which the title of this article is based; "Can man influence what happens to him when his life ends?" The answer is given to us in the purpose for why God created the earth<sup>15</sup> and all of humankind that have walked upon it.

Mankind was put on this planet Earth that by his own volition he would seek righteousness through the Only Begotten Son to return to the heavens to be eternally in the presence of God. If he chooses not to seek that return then put very simply – he dies and is totally destroyed "Dead as a door nail"; as they say.

But you my friends, for the sake of our Lord and Saviour, need to encourage and redirect the lost of the world to choose the pathway leading to life eternal.

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<sup>12</sup> Hebrews 9:27

<sup>13</sup> John 8:24

<sup>14</sup> John 11:26

<sup>15</sup> Note that the biblical word "earth" is not a proper noun and refers to physical matter in the universe.

God is patient – but there comes a time when the end arrives. So let's put our backs to the plough and tread the mill for our Lord seeks a bumper harvest.

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