

How to break out of our Local Cultural or Family Bias





Warning!!!

**For some of us
this might be the
most challenging
class all week.**

**But Bible Schools are a
great place to be challenged!**



What is bias?

Bias is the human tendency to make systematic errors in judgment, or making bad decisions based upon certain thinking, thoughts or preconceived notions.



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

APA Dictionary of Psychology

cultural bias

The tendency to interpret and judge phenomena in terms of the distinctive values, beliefs, and other characteristics of the society or community to which one belongs.

This sometimes leads people to form opinions and make decisions about others in advance of any actual experience with them (see [prejudice](#)).

Bias to our Favorite Auto Company



General Motors



TOYOTA



HONDA



HYUNDAI

We all have local & family cultural biases!

Bias to our Favorite Local Sports Teams



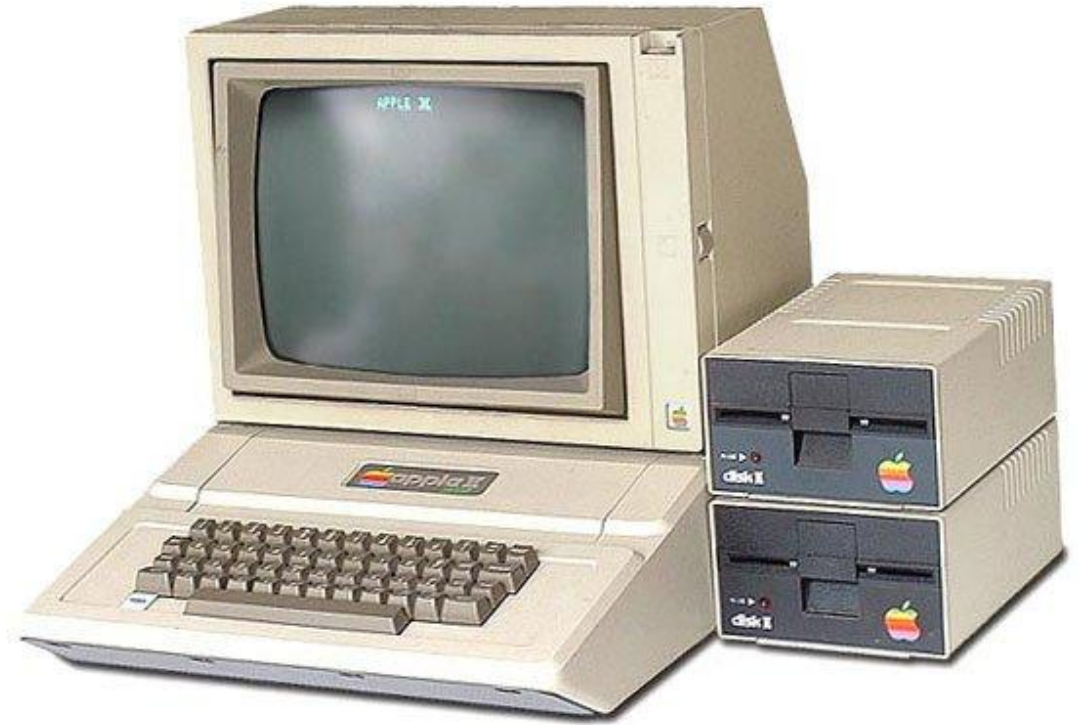
We all have local & family cultural biases!

Bias to our Favorite Local Sports Teams



We all have local & family cultural biases!

Free Apple Computers for schools!



In **January of 1983**, Jobs offered every elementary and high school in California with at least 100 students its own Apple IIe computer with 64k bytes of memory, a monitor, a floppy disk drive, coupons for software, and a manual for Apple Logo, a proprietary programming language aimed at students.

When did this become important to me?



- I preached that others should read their Bibles for themselves & believe what it says
- As I read the Bible myself, I began questioning some practices in my ecclesia & family & community – did we follow the Bible
- Sue & I had a lot of out of town visitors and we travelled, and realized there were a lot of different Christadelphian cultures in the USA and around the world

Bias can lead to Prejudice

James 2:1-7 ESV

1 My brothers, **show no partiality** as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. 2 For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, 3 **and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet,"** 4 **have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?** 5 Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

We become judges with evil thoughts!

Bias can lead to Prejudice

Ruth 4:3-6 ESV

3 Then he (Boaz) said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. 4 So I thought I would tell you of it and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you." **And he said, "I will redeem it."** 5 Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, **you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance.**" 6 Then **the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance.** Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

We become judges with evil thoughts!

Bias can lead to Prejudice

Numbers 12:1-3 ESV

1 Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses **because of the Cushite woman whom he had married**, for he had married a Cushite woman.
2 And they said, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" And the Lord heard it.

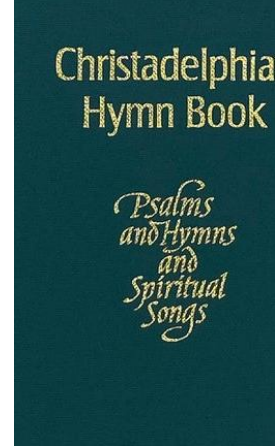
We become judges with evil thoughts!

Bias led to Prejudice against women who could not conceive

- **Gen 16:4** Hagar despised Sarah
- **Gen 29-30** Rachel & Leah
- **1 Sam 1:6** Peninnah provoked Hannah severely to make her miserable

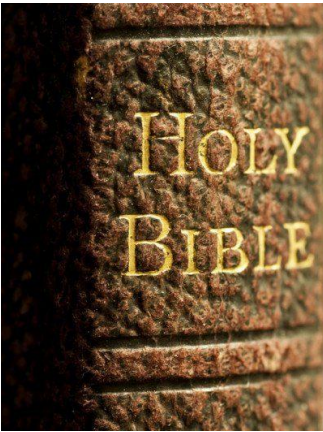


Women should have realized God granted power to conceive and if God withheld, it did not necessarily indicate He was punishing a woman



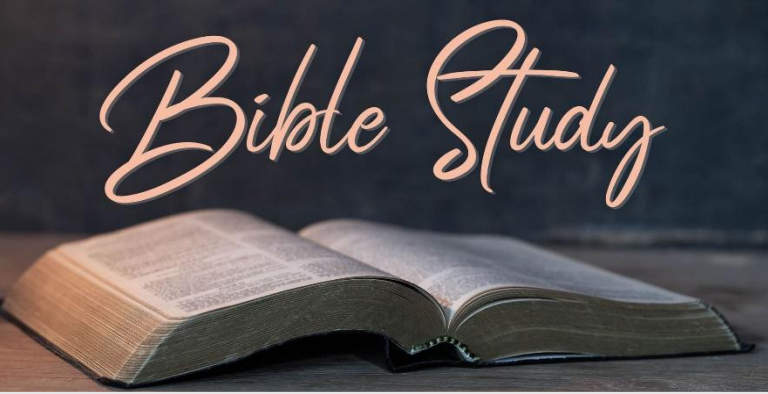
Local Cultural biases may not be Bible principles





HOLY
BIBLE

Doctrine
*Understanding
God & His Word*



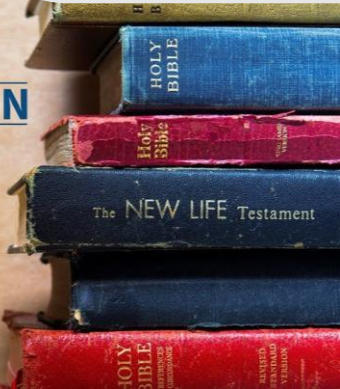
Bible Study



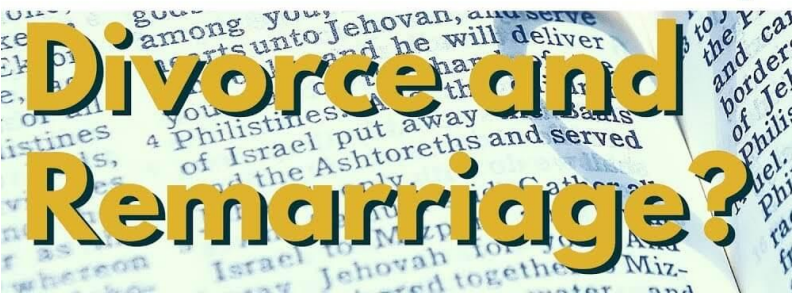
CHRISTIAN
MUSIC



Make sure your “important
Bible principles” can be
implemented worldwide



Which Bible
TRANSLATION
Should I Use?



What does the Bible say

Divorce and
Remarriage?



Many of our
Cultural &
Family customs
are helpful
worldwide!


JOIN US FOR
SUNDAY SCHOOL







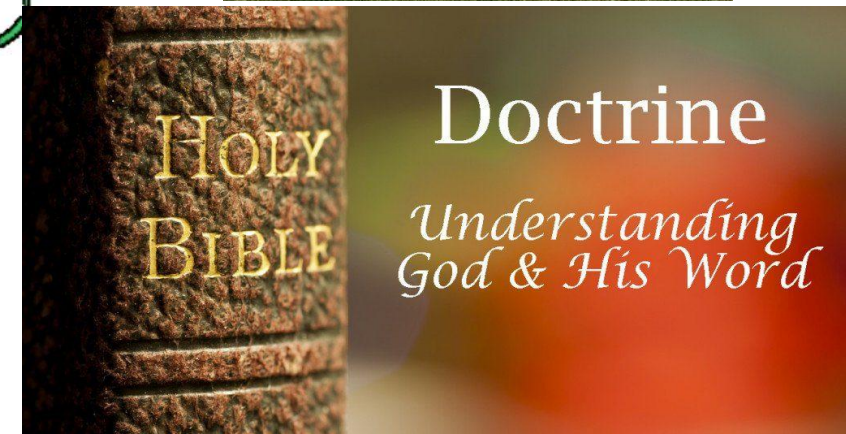
Where is any Bible passage that suggests we should close our eyes when praying?

what **REALLY** matters

- Things that affect our relationship with God
- Issues that affect how we treat others

How do we break out of our local cultural bias?

Separate local culture from Bible principles



How to break out of our Cultural & Family Bias

1st Step: realize
I do have local
family & cultural
biases

1st reaction:
How can we help?

Test everything
by reading the
Bible with an
open mind

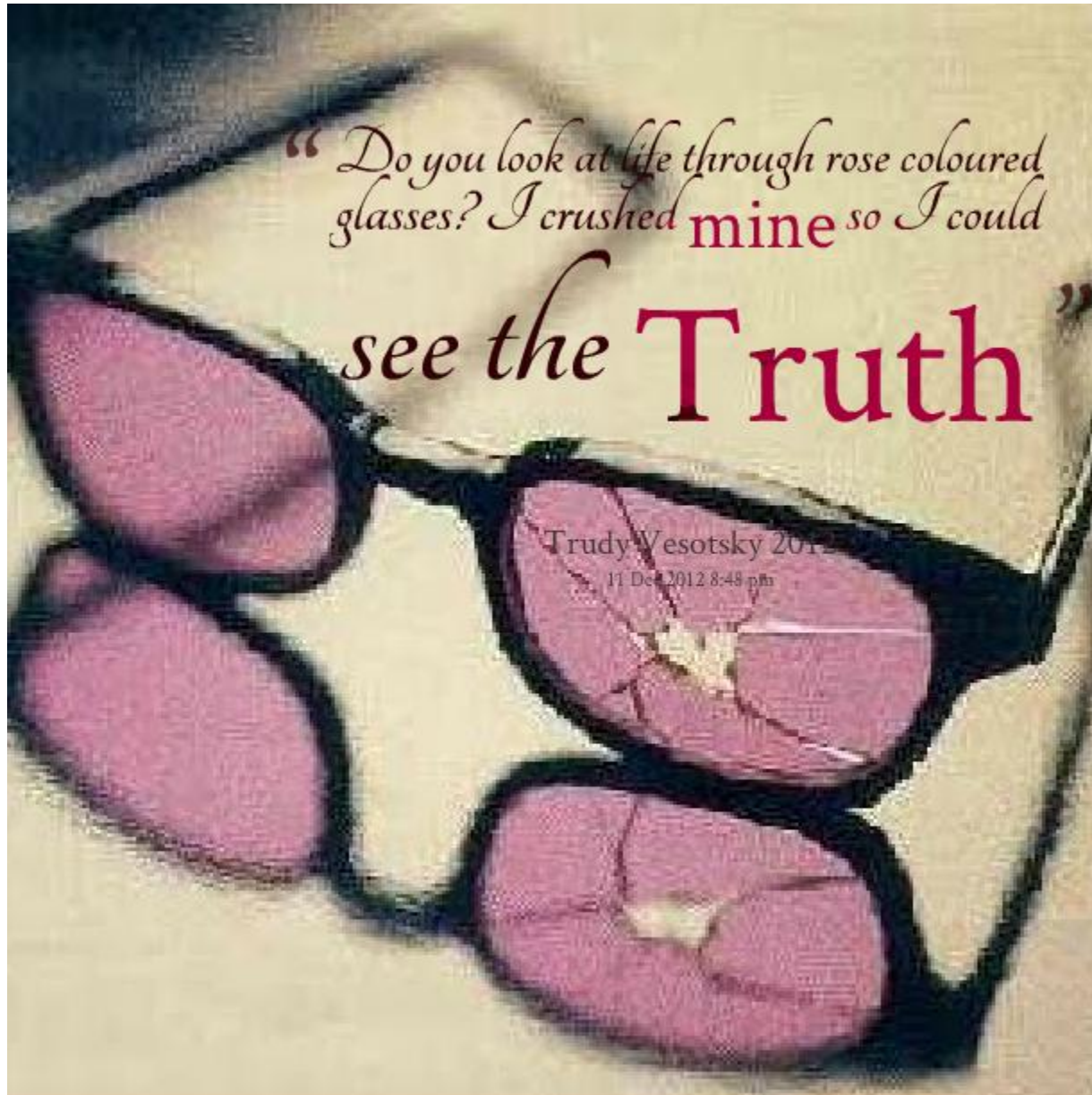


Travel to experience
other cultures

Realize angels
bring experiences
into our lives to
help us see another
perspective

Don't defend what
you can't
Biblically support

Ways to Break out of our Cultural or Family Bias



1st Step:

**Recognize we
all have cultural
bias & some of
it may not be
good or right**

**Pray for an open mind
(or we can't change & grow)**

Jews thought they were better than Gentiles

Habakkuk 1:12-13 NASB

12 Are You not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, my Holy One? **We will not die**. You, O Lord, have appointed them to judge; and You, O Rock, have established them to correct.

13 Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, and You can not look on wickedness with favor. Why do You look with favor on those who deal treacherously? **Why are You silent when the wicked swallow up those more righteous than they?**

Jews were only special because God had chosen them

Jews thought they were better than Gentiles

Luke 4:25-27 ESV

25 But in truth, I tell you, there were **many widows in Israel** in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, 26 and **Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon**, to a woman who was a widow. 27 And there were **many lepers in Israel** in the time of the prophet Elisha, and **none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.**"

Jews were only special because God had chosen them

God was working in Gentiles' lives outside the Law

2 Kings 5:15-19 ESV

15 Then **he (Naaman)** returned to the man of God (Elisha), he and all his company, and he came and stood before him. And he said, "Behold, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel; so accept now a present from your servant."

17 Then Naaman said, "If not, please let there be given to your servant **two mules' load of earth, for from now on your servant will not offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any god but the Lord.** 18 In this matter may the Lord pardon your servant: when my master goes into the house of Rimmon to worship there, leaning on my arm, and **I bow myself in the house of Rimmon,** when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon your servant in this matter." 19 He said to him, **"Go in peace."**

**God had never limited Himself to saving only Jews.
David knew this and set up the tabernacle of David to include Gentiles**

Cultural bias against the Cretans

Titus 1:10-15 ESV

10 For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, **especially those of the circumcision party**. 11 They must be silenced, **since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach**. 12 **One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."** 13 **This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith**, 14 not devoting themselves **to Jewish myths** and the commands of people who turn away from the truth.

Paul says rebuke them sharply for their damaging bias

Many of us have family bias

Judges 8:1-3 ESV

1 Then the **men of Ephraim** said to him (*Gideon*), "What is this that you have done to us, not to call us when you went to fight with Midian?" **And they accused him fiercely.** 2 And he said to them, "What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the grape harvest of Abiezer (*Gideon's ancestor - clan*)? 3 God has given into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. What have I been able to do in comparison with you?" Then their anger against him subsided when he said this.

We tend to side with and defend our families

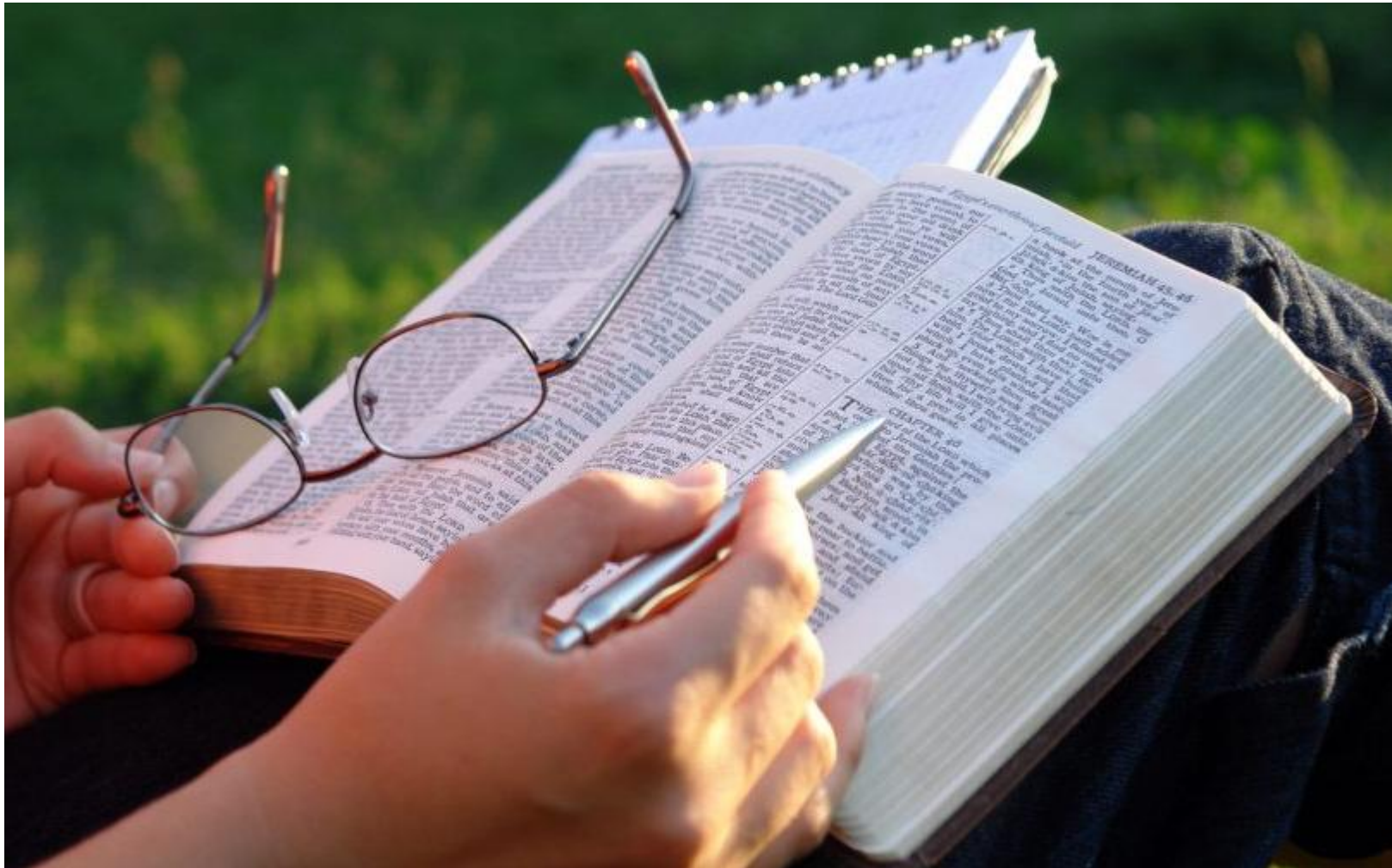
More family bias that leads to war

Judges 12:1-6 ESV

1 The **men of Ephraim** were called to arms, and they crossed to Zaphon and said to **Jephthah**, "Why did you cross over to fight against the Ammonites and did not call us to go with you? **We will burn your house over you with fire.**" 2 And Jephthah said to them, "I and my people had a great dispute with the Ammonites, and when I called you, you did not save me from their hand. 3 And when I saw that you would not save me, I took my life in my hand and crossed over against the Ammonites, and **the Lord gave them into my hand.** Why then have you come up to me this day to fight against me?" 4 Then **Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and fought with Ephraim.** And the men of Gilead struck Ephraim, because they said, "You are fugitives of Ephraim, you Gileadites, in the midst of Ephraim and Manasseh." 5 And the Gileadites captured the fords of the Jordan against the Ephraimites. And when any of the fugitives of Ephraim said, "Let me go over," the men of Gilead said to him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" When he said, "No," 6 they said to him, "Then say Shibboleth," and he said, "Sibboleth," for he could not pronounce it right. Then they seized him and slaughtered him at the fords of the Jordan. **At that time 42,000 of the Ephraimites fell.**

If we don't stop it, our bias can lead to spiritual war & death

Ways to Break out of our Cultural Bias



Read the Bible with an open mind – very hard to do!

Pray for Understanding

If 2 young people have sex do they have to get married?

Exodus 22:16-17 NIV

16 "If a man seduces a virgin who is not pledged to be married and sleeps with her, he must pay the bride-price, and she shall be his wife. 17 **If her father absolutely refuses to give her to him, he must still pay the bride-price for virgins.**

God allowed the girl's father to veto the marriage

Reading the Law like Jesus did

Matthew 12:1-8 ESV

1 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat.
2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath." 3 He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: 4 **how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?** 5 Or have you not read in the Law how **on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless?** 6 I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. 7 And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. [Mk 2:27 And he said to them, "**The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.**"] 8 For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."

Don't let Law prevent you from doing good!

Implementing the Law with compassion & kindness

Matthew 1:18-20 ESV

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19 And her husband Joseph, being a just man and **unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.**

Joseph did not have to publicly humiliate Mary & have her killed

Voting is not Biblical, it is influenced by Democracy

Proverbs 16:33 ESV

33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.

Acts 1:21-26 ESV

21 So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection." 23 And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. 24 And **they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen** 25 to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." 26 **And they cast lots for them,** and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

We have been influenced by our culture to choose voting

Casting Lots in the Bible

Lev 16:8 Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat.
Jos 18:6 in seven parts and bring *the survey* here to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our God.
Jos 18:8 the land, survey it, and come back to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh."
Jos 18:10 Then Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD, and there Joshua divided the land to the children
1Sa 14:42 And Saul said, "Cast *lots* between my son Jonathan and me." So Jonathan was taken.
1Ch 24:31 These also cast lots just as their brothers the sons of Aaron did, in the presence of King David, Zadok,
1Ch 25:8 And they cast lots for their duty, the small as well as the great, the teacher with the student.
1Ch 26:13 And they cast lots for each gate, the small as well as the great, according to their father's house.
1Ch 26:14 The lot for the East *Gate* fell to Shelemiah. Then they cast lots *for* his son Zechariah, a wise counselor, and
Ne 10:34 We cast lots among the priests, the Levites, and the people, for *bringing* the wood offering into the house
Ne 11:1 of the people dwelt at Jerusalem; the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to dwell in
Ps 22:18 They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.
Joel 3:3 They have cast lots for My people, Have given a boy *as payment* for a harlot, And sold a girl for wine, that
Obad 11 captive his forces, When foreigners entered his gates And cast lots for Jerusalem — Even you *were* as one of
Jnh 1:7 And they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this trouble *has*
Jnh 1:7 we may know for whose cause this trouble *has come* upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah.
Ac 1:26 And they cast their lots, and the *lot* fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

A great unbiased solution! Some of these people believed God was involved in their lives and would influence the result.

Ways to Break out of our Cultural Bias



**View
interested
friends as
“friends”**

Appreciate the positives the Bible brings to their lives

Ways to Break out of our Cultural Bias

Travel and notice how Christadelphians around the world live



Compare what you see with your Bible

Become more flexible

Acts 16:12-14 ESV

12 and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. 13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed **there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.**

Traveling helps us realize we must adapt
to the needs of the local bros and sis

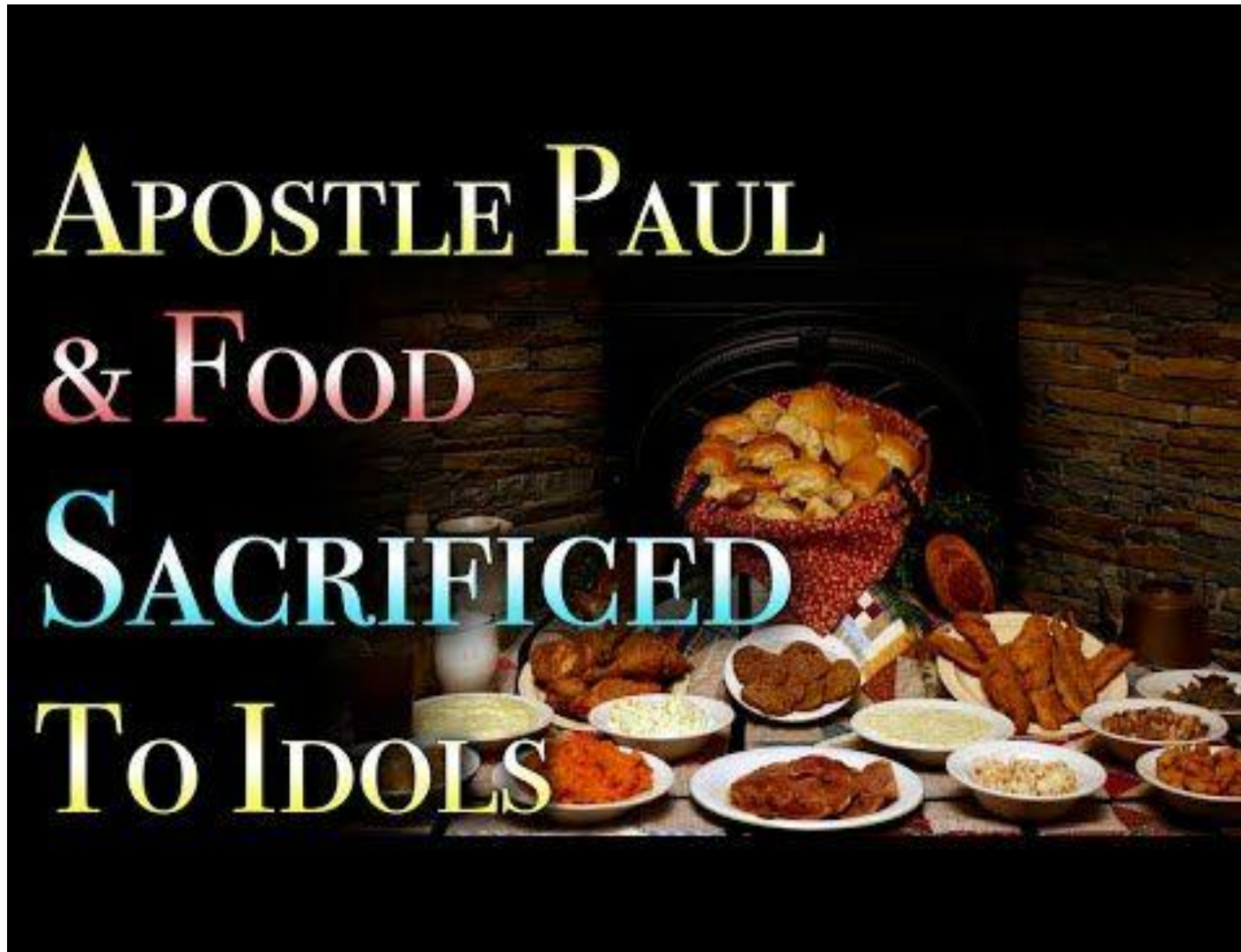
Focus on saving others! It makes us adapt & change

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 ESV

19 For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. 20 **To the Jews** I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. **To those under the law** I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. 21 **To those outside the law** I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. 22 To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. **I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.**

We don't have to force others to do things our way or make them feel they don't do things the "right" way

Ways to Break out of our Cultural Bias



**Travel & Realize
God accepts
various cultural
ways**

**Become more
accepting of other
cultural ways even if
you do not practice
them yourself**

Paul's advice for becoming more tolerant of other cultures

Romans 14:1-6, 10 ESV

1 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, **but not to quarrel over opinions.** 2 **One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables.** 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. 4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

5 **One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike.** Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.

10 **Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God;**

Don't pass judgment on others over non-essential items

Don't impose our culture on others

1 Corinthians 8 (ESV)

4 Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "an idol has no real existence," and that "there is no God but one."

7 However, **not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.** 8 Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. 9 **But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.** 10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? 11 And **so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died.** 12 Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, **you sin against Christ.** 13 Therefore, **if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.**

We might be responsible for harming God's children

Ways to Break out of our Cultural Bias



What the
Bible Says
About Music?

**Don't defend
what you
cannot
Biblically
support**



Closing your eyes to pray

John 11:41 ESV

41 So they took away the stone. **And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said,** "Father, I thank you that you have heard me.

John 17-1-3 ESV

When Jesus had spoken these words, **he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said,** "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

Sometimes it's good to look up or at what you are praying about

Looking down when praying

Luke 18:9-13 ESV

9 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: 10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a **Pharisee** and the other a tax collector. 11 **The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.'** 13 But the **tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven (a common way to pray),** but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'

Sometimes it's good to look down in humility

There's not much said about how we dress for meeting

1 Timothy 2:9-10 ESV

9 likewise also that women should adorn themselves in **respectable apparel**, with **modesty** and **self-control**, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, 10 but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—**with good works**.

“respectable apparel” with “modesty” may mean different things to different cultures

Most of the passages about dress are for women

1 Peter 3:1-6 NIV

Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, 2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. 3 **Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes.** 4 Instead, **it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.** 5 For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, 6 like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear.

**Thrust of these passages is to focus on good behavior,
not outward beauty and expensive clothes**

A man with short brown hair is lying in a bed, eyes closed, appearing to be asleep. He is wearing a dark blue button-down shirt. A single red rose with green leaves is resting on his chest. The bed has white ruffled pillows and a white blanket. In the background, a white bedside table with a vase is visible.

**You do not have
an immortal soul**

**Find Bible passages
that support this**

**If that is the way we approach Bible study,
we will always be stuck in our cultural bias**

Ways to Break out of our Cultural Bias

Recognize that God intervenes in our lives



Paul's conversion

Constantly ask ourselves what is God trying to teach us from our experiences?

Most of us resist changing

Acts 10:9-16 ESV

9 The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. 10 And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, **he fell into a trance** 11 and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. 12 In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. 13 And there came a voice to him: **"Rise, Peter; kill and eat."** 14 But Peter said, **"By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean."** 15 And the voice came to him again a **second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common."** 16 This happened **three times**, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

God is patient, but He does expect us to listen & respond

Peter still had a bias against Gentiles

Galatians 2:11-16 ESV

11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. 12 **For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party.** 13 **And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him,** so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. 14 But when I saw that **their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel,** I said to Cephas before them all, "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

15 We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; 16 yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.

God expects us to overcome our cultural bias: it's tough!

Manasseh's Captivity & Repentance

2 Chronicles 33:10-13 ESV

10 The Lord spoke to Manasseh and to his people, but they paid no attention. 11 Therefore the Lord brought upon them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria, who captured Manasseh with hooks and bound him with chains of bronze and brought him to Babylon. 12 And when he was in distress, he entreated the favor of the Lord his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. 13 He prayed to him, and God was moved by his entreaty and heard his plea and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord was God.

God does speak to us through the events of our lives

God uses events of our lives to awaken our conscience

Genesis 42:18-23 ESV

18 On the third day Joseph said to them, "Do this and you will live, for I fear God: 19 if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households, 20 and bring your youngest brother to me. So your words will be verified, and you shall not die." And they did so.

21 Then they said to one another, **"In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us."**

22 And Reuben answered them, "Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy? But you did not listen. **So now there comes a reckoning for his blood."**

Our relationship with God begins with fear,
but later He hopes it will blossom into love

Divorce *and* Remarriage



All it takes is an
intermarriage within
our family & we are
forced to compare our
bias to the Bible

Hye Texas Unamended Bible School

SW Texas Amended Bible School

Texas Berean Bible School

Ways to Break out of our Local Cultural Bias

MATUMAINI HOME

This home is a shelter for more than 50 young people who are orphans, unwanted or living in abject poverty. They have found help at Matumaini where they learn about a spiritual hope for the future, and where most are in high school or college thanks to sponsorship. It is a very dry area where sometimes it does not rain for more than an entire year. This home is run by Bro Lazarus and Sis Evelyn and is located in Yatta, a town on the outskirts of Nairobi.



Learn to be thankful for the help we can give or get from others

Sharing our resources helps us unite

God brings in others to help us & break down our bias

2 Corinthians 9:12-15 TNIV

12 This service that you perform (*collection for the Jerusalem poor fund*) is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, people will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. 14 **And in their**

prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. 15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Paul hoped the Jerusalem poor fund gift would cause Jewish believers to finally appreciate the Gentile believers & thank God for them!

Learning to appreciate how each person can help us

Judges 11:1-7 ESV

1 Now **Jephthah** the Gileadite was a mighty warrior, but he was the **son of a prostitute**. Gilead was the father of Jephthah. 2 And Gilead's wife also bore him sons. And **when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out and said to him, "You shall not have an inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman."** 3 Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob, and worthless fellows collected around Jephthah and went out with him.

4 After a time **the Ammonites made war against Israel**. 5 And when the Ammonites made war against Israel, **the elders of Gilead went to bring Jephthah from the land of Tob**. 6 And they said to Jephthah, **"Come and be our leader, that we may fight with the Ammonites."**

Sometimes God brings events into our lives to help us realize we need everyone in the body of Christ

Learning to appreciate how each person can help us

Ezra 3:1-3 ESV

1 When the seventh month came, and the children of Israel were in the towns, **the people gathered as one man to Jerusalem.** *[as Ezekiel had predicted in 37:21 – one nation, one king].* 2 Then arose Jeshua the son of Jozadak, with his fellow priests, and Zerubbabel *(would have been king)* the son of Shealtiel with his kinsmen, and they built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the Law of Moses the man of God. 3 They set the altar in its place, **for fear was on them because of the peoples of the lands,** and they offered burnt offerings on it to the Lord, burnt offerings morning and evening.

Sometimes God brings events into our lives to help us realize we need everyone in the body of Christ

Ways to Break out of our Cultural Bias



Try to
develop a
balance
between
extreme
views



**Make no mistake:
God does not want us to practice homosexuality**

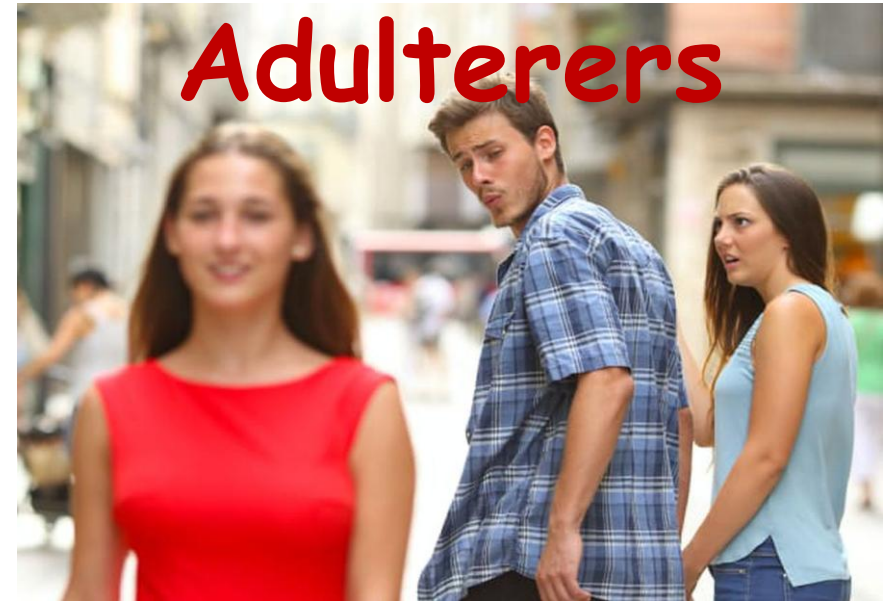
1 Corinthians 6:9-11 ESV

9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? **Do not be deceived:** neither the **sexually immoral**, nor **idolaters**, nor **adulterers**, nor **men who practice homosexuality**, 10 nor **thieves**, nor the **greedy**, nor **drunkards**, nor **revilers**, nor **swindlers** **will inherit the kingdom of God**. 11 And **such were some of you**. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Paul links homosexuality with many other common sins and emphasizes that righteous believers no longer practice these



Realize all
believers
are
fighting
their
natural
sinful
desires



Conversion doesn't eliminate the desire,
it intensifies the battle!

Ways to Break out of our Cultural Bias



John Thomas

**Discover
what our
pioneer
brothers
believed**

Robert Roberts



John Thomas thought there was at least one previous creation on earth: *Elpis Israel*



The *general* account of the work of the six days is contained in the first chapter of Genesis...

Let the reader peruse the history of the creation as a revelation to himself as an inhabitant of the earth. It informs him of the order in which the things narrated would have developed themselves to his view, had he been placed on some projecting rock, the spectator of the events detailed. He must remember this.

John Thomas thought there was at least one previous creation on earth: **Elpis Israel**



The Mosaic account is not a revelation to the inhabitants of other orbs remote from the earth of the formation of the boundless universe; but to man, as a constituent of the terrestrial system. This will explain why light is said to have been created four days before the sun, moon, and stars. To an observer on the earth, this was *the order of their appearance*; and in relation to him a *primary* creation, **though absolutely pre-existent for millions of ages before the Adamic Era.**



Elpis Israel (Chapter 2) by John Thomas

The *duration* of the earth's revolutions round the sun previous to the work of the first day is not revealed; but **the evidences produced by the strata of our globe show that the period was long continued.** There are indeed hints, casually dropped in the scriptures, which would seem to indicate, that **our planet was inhabited by a race of beings anterior to the formation of man.**

I know of no evidence Thomas changed his mind



The Christadelphian 1885 In the Beginning" by Robert Roberts

It is a demonstrable fact that the earth has existed for ages. To adopt a view that appears to make it begin only 6,000 years ago would create a difficulty. There is no need for adopting such a view.

I know of no evidence Roberts changed his mind

Sisters' Head Coverings - 1 Cor 11:2-16 (ESV)

2 Now I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I delivered them to you. 3 But I want you to understand that **the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.** 4 Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head, 5 but **every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head**—it is the same as if her head were shaven. 6 For if a wife will not cover her head, then she should cut her hair short. But since it is disgraceful for a wife to cut off her hair or shave her head, let her cover her head. 7 For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man.

Principle is clear: There is an order

Sisters' Head Coverings - 1 Cor 11:2-16 (ESV)

9 Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. 10 That is why a wife ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. 11 Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; 12 for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God. 13 Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a wife to pray to God with her head uncovered? 14 Does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears long hair it is a disgrace for him, 15 but if a woman has long hair, it is her glory? For her hair is given to her for a covering. 16 **If anyone is inclined to be contentious, we have no such practice, nor do the churches of God.**

16 If any one is disposed to be contentious, we recognize no other practice, nor do the churches of God. (RSV)

Robert Robert's answer about Head Coverings

The Christadelphian; Feb. 1, 1872, Page 87. IS IT A SHAME?

"The ecclesia of which I am a member meet at a private house, where reside several sisters. Is it 'a shame' for them to attend our meetings without bonnets? One sister declared she would not break bread with us if we were bare-headed. Her authority is 1 Cor. xi. 5, 6. --W."

ANSWER--Paul treats the matter as one of taste purely. Probably there was need: for though matters of taste are not so vital as those of principle, they are indirectly related to the higher aspect of things. The position of woman appears to have been submitted to Paul's judgment and advice, in the same way as other questions related to her in 1 Cor. vii. 1. **If a Party among the Corinthians shared some modern tendencies on the subject, they might encourage the sisters to insist upon a position of equality, and in token of it to appear in the assembly of the brethren bareheaded** -- the covering of the

Robert Robert's answer about Head Coverings

head being among the ancients as among the Jews at the present day, a token of reverence. Paul distinctly condemns this. He says a man ought not to cover his head at such times, because he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of the man, and ought for that reason to conform to the token of her position -- (verse 7). This is Paul's view of the matter, which he sustains by an appeal to natural sense: "Is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?" **Finally, he dismisses the matter as one of no practical moment.** "But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God." **As much as to say, the man who is disposed to debate the question on some theory of abstract equality, don't debate it with him: the apostolic churches recognize no such custom as that advocated for by the champion of "woman's rights."** In the Lord, "neither is the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man." -- (verse 11).

Robert Robert's answer about Head Coverings

In a sense, they are both equal: for in Christ there is neither male nor female; yet there is in all things a fitness which requires a recognition of woman's beautiful place, at the hands of both man and woman. **The privacy of a house alters the case. Paul is discoursing of public assembly only, in which the rules of propriety are different from those applicable to domestic surroundings.** It is good always to be zealously affected in a good cause; and the cause of apostolic precept is a good cause; but zeal must go hand-in-hand with discernment, or it will lead us into mistakes.

Robert Robert's answer about Head Coverings

The Christadelphian -- April 1891, Page 65

--(H. E. S.) (1 Cor. xi. 4-10). -- If you will read "the appointment of" after the words "Because of," you will get Paul's idea: Paul is referring to the original position of woman as a reason for the covering of her head in public assembly. This original position was regulated by the ministry of the angels in whose image Adam was made. In Oriental custom the covering was a token of deference, as illustrated to this day in the Jew keeping his hat on in taking the oath in public courts; and as the "woman is the glory of the man," "created for the man," and out of the man, Paul contended that the liberty contended for by some in his day who were in favor of woman appearing on a level with man, in appearing bareheaded with him in acts of "praying and prophesying," was inconsistent with the originally-expressed will of God by the angels, and contrary to natural decency. **The matter has little application in our day, except in so far as it discredits the foolish tendencies to put woman on a par with man.**

Robert Robert's answer about Head Coverings

The Christadelphian April 1895, Page 140 FEMALE HEAD-DRESS.

J.C. -- The question of women being covered or uncovered in the exercises of worship is not of very great importance, and may easily become a hurtful question. **Though Paul introduces it in 1 Cor. xi. 1, he also dismisses it as an inadmissible topic of controversy. "If any man be contentious," he says (on the subject), "we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." That the question should be raised as a question of propriety in the East in Paul's day is not to be wondered at considering the extreme seclusion of the female sex in the social customs of those countries.** The probability is that the question arose through the feeling amongst believers that **the truth had freed woman from some of the tyrannous restrictions of Oriental etiquette, and made her more man's companion as a sister in Christ, and that therefore the tokens or badges of inferiority were out of place.**

Robert Robert's answer about Head Coverings

The Christadelphian April 1895, Page 140

This would lead sticklers for custom to object to the liberty taken by sisters in the matter, with the concurrence of wise brethren, and it evidently led to an appeal being made to Paul. Paul's answer inclines to the observance of Customary etiquette, but, as already said, **he dismisses it as a matter not to be debated one way or the other amongst brethren.** **It is undoubtedly proper and becoming for the sisters to have their heads covered at the breaking of bread, and indeed in all other public assemblies,** for the absence of covering seems to indicate a boldness and lightness of character in woman not conformable with the spirit of the Truth; **but if there is any disposition to raise contention on the subject, the best way is to consider peace, and give in to the scruples of the critics -- it does not matter much one way or other.**

God does hate divorce!

Malachi 2:14-16 NKJV

14 Yet you say, "For what reason?" Because the Lord has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, with whom you have dealt treacherously; yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant.

15 **But did He not make ~~them~~ one, having a remnant of the Spirit?** And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.

16 "For the Lord God of Israel says that **He hates divorce**, for it covers one's garment with violence," says the Lord of hosts. "Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."

Yet God hates a whole lot of others sins too!

God hates all the ways people mistreat people

Zechariah 8:14-17 ESV

14 For thus says the Lord of hosts: "As I purposed to bring disaster to you when your fathers provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent, says the Lord of hosts, 15 so again have I purposed in these days to bring good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; fear not. 16 These are the things that you shall do: **Speak the truth** to one another; render in your gates **judgments that are true and make for peace**; 17 **do not devise evil in your hearts against one another**, and **love no false oath, for all these things I hate, declares the Lord.**"

God hates them all, but is willing to forgive those who repent

God hates all the ways people mistreat people

Proverbs 8:9 ESV

13 The fear of the Lord is hatred of evil. **Pride and arrogance** and **the way of evil** and **perverted speech I hate**.

Amos 5:21-24 ESV

21 **"I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.** 22 Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them. 23 Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen. 24 **But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.**

God hates them all, but is willing to forgive those who repent

Same God who hates divorce also regulated it!

Deuteronomy 24:1-4 ESV

1 "When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and **he writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house**, and she departs out of his house, 2 and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, 3 and **the latter man hates her and writes her a certificate of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house**, or if the latter man dies, who took her to be his wife, 4 **then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife**, after she has been defiled, for that is an abomination before the Lord. And you shall not bring sin upon the land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance.

He regulated it so women would not be further mistreated

Even with Christ ruling, divorce will continue in the Kingdom

Ezekiel 44:15-23 ESV

15 "But **the Levitical priests**, the sons of Zadok, who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people of Israel went astray from me, shall come near to me to minister to me. And they shall stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood, declares the Lord God.

20 They shall not shave their heads or let their locks grow long; they shall surely trim the hair of their heads. 21 **No priest** shall drink wine when he enters the inner court. 22 **They shall not marry a widow or a divorced woman** (*but this restriction will not apply to the common people*), but only virgins of the offspring of the house of Israel, or a widow who is the widow of a priest.

God will hold His priests to a higher standard again

what **REALLY** matters

- Things that affect our relationship with God
- Issues that affect how we treat others