

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

There are hundreds of scriptures that contrast God to man. There are hundreds of scriptures that instruct man not to trust in man, and the utter futility of so doing. But, the scriptures require man to place his utmost confidence, and trust, in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, He is God.

In Isaiah 46:9, we read, ". . .I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me." In Hosea 11:9, we read again, ". . . I am God, and not man. . ." This contrast, and distinction, is more fully seen in Isaiah 40:6-8, as follows:

". . .all flesh is grass, and all the godliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth. . .but the word of our God shall stand for ever."

The limitation of man is viewed in the words of Luke 12:25, 26 as follows:

"And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?"

Yet, in contrast, we read of God:

". . .with men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26).

Notice some other scriptures contrasting God and man as follows:

1. Of man, ". . .man looketh on the outward appearance..."
2. Of God, ". . .but the Lord looketh on the heart"
(I Samuel 16:7);

1. Of man, ". . .there is none that doeth good, no, not one"
(Romans 3:12);
2. Of God, "Thou art good, and doest good. . ." (Psalms 119:68);

1. Of man, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. . ." (Jeremiah 17:9);
2. Of God, ". . .God is light, and in him is no darkness at all"
(I John 1:5);

1. Of man, "The wicked. . .go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Psalms 58:3);
 2. Of God, ". . .it was impossible for God to lie. . ." (Hebrews 6:18);
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1. Of man, ". . .our days upon earth are a shadow" (Job 8:9);
 2. Of God, "the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity. . ." (Isaiah 57:15);
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1. Of man, ". . .the thoughts of man. . .are vanity. . ." (Psalms 94:11);
 2. Of God, "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations" (Psalms 33:11);
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1. Of man, "Man that is born of woman is of few days. . ." (Job 14:1);
 2. Of God, ". . .from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psalms 90:2);
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1. Of man, "For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him?. . ." (I Corinthians 2:11);
 2. Of God, ". . .all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Hebrews 4:13);
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1. Of man, ". . .shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, what makest thou? . ." (Isaiah 45:9);
 2. Of God, "I made the earth, and created man upon it. . ." (Isaiah 45:12);
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1. Of man, ". . .man. . .shall die. . ." (Isaiah 51:12);
 2. Of God, "who only hath immortality. . ." (I Timothy 6:16);
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1. Of man, "None. . .can by any means deliver his brother nor give to God a ransom for him. . .For the redemption of their soul is precious. . ." (Psalms 49:7,8);
 2. Of God, "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave. . ." (Psalms 49:15)

Although it is not my purpose, at this point in this article, to prove that Jesus Christ is God, let me just say this: In the previous series of contrasts between God and man, all of the things mentioned which are true of God are also true of the Lord Jesus Christ. For instance:

1. Of God, we said, ". . .the Lord looketh on the heart."

2. Yet, of Christ, we read, "I know thy works. . .I am he which searcheth the hearts. . ." (Revelation 2:19, 23).
1. Of God, we said, "I made the earth, and created man upon it. . ."
2. Yet, of Christ, we read, "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3).
1. Of God, we said, ". . .it was impossible for God to lie. . ."
2. Yet, of Christ, we hear him say, ". . .I am the. . .truth. . ." (John 14:6), etc.

The things which are true of God, not any man, are true of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, He is God. But, as we study the subject matter of this article, we will see positively that Jesus Christ is God from a different angle. "There is a difference between God and man." We have proved that by presenting 29 scriptures in the opening remarks of this article.

Although these examples could be multiplied indefinitely, these suffice to demonstrate the scriptural distinction, and contrast, between God and man. Since such a contrast does exist, we then can more fully understand the futility of trusting in man, and not God, and why.

In Isaiah 31:1 we read:

"Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help. . .but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord!"

In verse 3, we also read:

"Now the Egyptians are men, and not god; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together."

Thus, God speaks:

"I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; And forgettest thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth. . ." (Isaiah 51:12, 13).

In Psalms 118:8, we read:

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."

But, why? Because the creator alone is able to save. Paul establishes that fact in preaching to Gentiles (Acts 14:15; 17:24). The one who promises "eternal life" is the very One who created life and, therefore, has power over life to both give it, and to raise the dead (John 1:3; 4:14; 5:28; 6:47; 11:25, 26).

In Psalms 146:3-6, we read again:

"Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God: Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever:"

Many people trust in human leadership to correct this world's troubles. And, many world leaders promise certain things to that end, and have good intentions of carrying them out. But, often they are not able to keep their promises. One thing that keeps them from fulfilling their intentions is death, the inevitable end of all men apart from divine intervention. Thus, when "his breath goeth forth," and he dies, "in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psalms 146:4). The words, "his thoughts perish," have nothing whatever to do with consciousness after death, as Jehovah's Witnesses, self-called, claim. The expression "his thoughts" has to do with the intentions, or purposes, of the "princes" toward those who, by reason thereof, would be inclined to put their trust in them. Job writes, "My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart" (Job 17:11). One's "purposes" are to be accomplished during that time spoken of by Job as "my days." Thus, James writes, "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that" (James 4:14,15). When death comes, as in the case of the "princes" of Psalms 146:3-6, their "purposes" are thwarted. Memory, however, does persist after physical death, as Luke 16:22, 25 clearly shows. Therefore, it is not the "heart" of Job 17:11 said to be "broken off," but the "purposes." David warns against trusting in "princes" for that reason. But, in contrast, when one's "hope is in the Lord his God," then rest assured:

"The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations" (Psalms 33:11).

Isaiah writes:

"Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils. . ." (Isaiah 2:22).

Jeremiah writes:

"Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit" (Jeremiah 17:5-8).

Now notice:

1. "Cease ye from man";
2. "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man";
3. "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord."

In Exodus 34:14, we read:

"For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God."

This God is declared in scripture to be the Self-Existent One, from everlasting to everlasting, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Immutable, the Holy One, Creator, Preserver, and Administrator of all things in heaven and earth, the Searcher of hearts, and the most high Judge of all.

When sin entered, and man had broken his commands, and trodden the seductive paths of disobedience and guilt, as great as all the foregoing characteristics of God are, the Lord gives man a deeper revelation of His holiness, love, mercy and grace. He reveals Himself as the only being who can, and does, forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin, as the only refuge for the fugitive, as the only Saviour, Deliverer, and Redeemer of His people.

He alone is worthy of your trust and praise and worship.

In Nehemiah 9:5-7, we read:

". . .blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even thou, art Lord alone, thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee. Thou art the Lord. . ."

Such adoration, praise, and worship is re-echoed in the palaces of heavenly glory:

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Revelation 4:11).

The many scriptures that we have heretofore used prove conclusively, to the honest, truth seeking mind the following:

1. That there is a contrast between God and man;
2. And, that man is instructed not to trust in man, but in God.

With those facts established, you might well ask yourself, "To what purpose is such a difference?" The Lord Jesus Christ, who in wondrous union with the Father, but of distinct personality from the Father, to whom all the attributes of God are ascribed, receives, in scripture, without protest, or rebuke, equal trust, adoration, love, worship, and service due only to the One who said:

"I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images" (Isaiah 42:8).

If this can be established, and we purpose, before we get through with this entire article, to prove it, then it will be made manifest that the dignity of the Son of God stands infinitely above all creatures, and is on a perfect level with the increate Father.

Are you willing to admit that there is a difference between God and man, as scripture clearly teaches? Are you willing to admit that, because of those clear cut, infinite differences, you are required by God to put your utmost confidence, and trust in Him, and not in man? Most people would agree with both conclusions! But, think now! According to the New Testament, the One in whom man is required to trust, have confidence in, believe on, to repose in, is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, the Saviour of the world.

By no stretch of the imagination does God compel mankind to trust in any creature, exalted, or otherwise. The distance between God and the most exalted creature is nonetheless infinite. It takes God to bring you to God, and the Lord Jesus can bring you no nearer to God than He Himself is.

God's word obligates mankind, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31). Is this One, in whom I am to trust, less than God? If He is, then I am not to trust Him at all. If He is not, then I am to trust Him. Since I am to trust Him, and no other, then He is very God.

Think now!

1. There is a difference between God and man;
2. Do not trust in man, but in God.

The Old Testament: "Cease ye from man. . .cursed be the man that trusteth in man. . .blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord."

The New Testament: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. . .he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. . .whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. . .he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

The entire redemptive plan hinges upon the Deity of the Son of God, and the measure of God's love is reduced to naught if God gave only a creature to man as this love-gift to them. Such an expression of divine love would be feeble indeed. There is a necessary connection between who Christ is, and His death for the salvation of men. If He was merely a creature, a human instructor, then what benefit do men derive from the voluntary death of Christ? If it be said that His death was merely an example, then it is not peculiar inasmuch as both the prophets and apostles also died with conviction. If it be said that it was to confirm His teaching, then it was nugatory since His teaching had already been credentialized by countless miracles. If it be said that His death was merely to strengthen His mission by resurrection, this might as well have resulted from a natural death in old age, as from a violent death in midlife. The motive to generous sacrifice of ease and life, on behalf of man, drawn from the death of the Lord of glory, has, therefore, no meaningful purpose whenever Christ's Deity is denied. "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?" The answer you give stakes the eternal destiny of your soul.

This one, in whom, you are required to place your trust, or eternally perish, is God. No creature is worthy of your trust, or

worship, and cannot save himself, much less you.

Later in this writing we purpose to consider more fully the attributes of God, and show them to be possessed by the Lord Jesus Christ.

But, since we have introduced the idea that there is a "difference between God and man," and that Jesus Christ is God, let us now devote an entire chapter to "the witness of scripture to the things true of the Father and the Son," thereby proving an equality in the things given.