

Unblended Faith

Deuteronomy 4:1-9



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FOCAL Read Responsively Deuteronomy 4:1-9 Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do [them], that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you. {2} **Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish [ought] from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.** {3} Your eyes have seen what the LORD did because of Baalpeor: for all the men that followed Baalpeor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you. {4} **But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God [are] alive every one of you this day.** {5} **Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.** {6} **Keep therefore and do [them]; for this [is] your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation [is] a wise and understanding people.** {7} For what nation [is there so] great, who [hath] God [so] nigh unto them, as the LORD our God [is] in all [things that] we call upon him [for]? {8} And what nation [is there so] great, that hath statutes and judgments [so] righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? {9} **Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;**

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

We live in a day where the world expects Christians to tolerate all religions, to embrace the teaching that “all faiths are essentially the same”. This is not true, but this is what the world expects us to embrace. Sadly, many believers have been deceived into doing this very thing. Recently

“In an official transcript released by the White House, the president said, “...I believe in an almighty God, and I believe that all the world, whether they be Muslim, Christian, or any other religion, prays to the same God.” Later in the interview, the president repeated his statement: “I believe there is a universal God. I believe the God that the Muslim prays to is the same God that I pray to. After all, we all came from Abraham. I believe in that universality.”¹

Though I love our President and have only deep respect for him, he is absolutely and positively wrong in what he said. The Bible that we as Christians read and cherish does not accept that “all religions pray to the same God”. The Bible does not support the concept of Universalism – the idea that anyone can come to God by any means and still be accepted of Him. That concept may *seem right* – but the Bible warns **“there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 16:25)**. What *sounds* right is *not* right if it is not supported by the Holy Scripture. What has God said? Faith in Jesus Christ is the only Way unto Heaven. Jesus said plainly:

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the

truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Not clear enough? You need to hear it a little clearer? Then read this:

John 10:7-9 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. {8} All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. {9} I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

Jesus said this, not I. **“All who came before Me were thieves and robbers”**. The world says “any way to God is fine – we're all praying to the same God”. The Lord says **“all who came before Me were thieves and robbers”**. Why is that? Because these who stand as saviors apart from Christ are trying to steal what is rightfully His. Jesus Christ alone died on Calvary to make payment for sin. Jesus Christ alone is the **“Door by which, if any person enter in, he shall be saved”**. Jesus was quite clear in His teachings that He and He alone is the only Way to peace with God – and the remainder of the New Testament writings fully support what He declared. Unless a person surrender their life to Jesus, that person has no hope of ever seeing Heaven in the next life.

The Church must stand strong and in one accord on the truth that Peter preached:

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for

¹ *The Same God?* by Cal Thomas, 10/09/2007

there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

The world may look at you and say **“what ignorant and unlearned men! Don't they know that 'God is love' and that He will surely save all? Don't they know that our philosophers have proved that God – if He be good – will ultimately put every soul into His Heaven? Don't they know that God has revealed Himself in Muhammad, in Moroni, in Zeus, in Jupiter, in Baal, in Baalpeor?”** No, God has not! Moses told God's people:

Deuteronomy 4:2-4 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish [ought] from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. {3} Your eyes have seen what the LORD did because of Baalpeor: for all the men that followed Baalpeor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you. {4} But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God [are] alive every one of you this day.

“Don't you remember what happened in Shittim, when you – My children – began to bond to the unbelievers of Moab? Don't you remember the Moabites inviting you to their festivals? Don't you remember what happened when you bowed down to their false gods? On that day My anger was kindled against Israel, and those who followed the false gods died in their sins (see Numbers 25:1-5)”.

Dear Christian, do not blend your faith with other faiths.

Tell others about the great salvation that you have experienced. Tell them that Jesus Christ came to seek and to save those who are lost. Tell them that the Lord loves them, just as He loves you, and wants to redeem them from sin and death. You are not being a blessing to the lost when you condone their gods and goddesses. There is but one way unto God, and that way is by faith in Jesus Christ alone. Tell them, for **“he that winneth souls is wise” (Proverbs 11:30).**

God's People Follow God's Statutes And Judgments

FOCAL Deuteronomy 4:1-2 Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do [them], that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you. {2} Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish [ought] from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.

God does not expect the world to live according to His commandments. Look at our text:

FOCAL Deuteronomy 4:1 Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes² and unto the judgments³,

2 H2706, כִּוּ, chôq, *khoqe*, From H2710; an *enactment*; hence an *appointment* (of time, space, quantity, labor or usage): - appointed, bound, commandment, convenient, custom, decree (-d), due, law, measure, X necessary, ordinance (-nary), portion, set time, statute, task.

3 H4941, מִשְׁפָּט, mishpât, *mish-pawt'*, From H8199; properly a *verdict* (favorable or unfavorable) pronounced judicially, especially a

which I teach you

God said “Listen up, Israel – I’m teaching YOU this”.
God gave commandments and statutes to His people.
Dr. Thomas Constable⁴ states:

“ **"Statutes" (v. 1) were the permanent basic rules of conduct whereas "judgments" (ordinances, v. 1) were decisions God revealed in answer to specific needs.**”

God gives His people *permanent rules of conduct* as well as *general direction in how we live our daily lives*. Israel was given Ten Commandment or standards of conduct that were absolute. But the Lord also gave His people direction on dress, sanitation, and even on the type of food they could eat. The ancient Israelite, for instance, was not allowed to eat foods that God called *unclean*. But after the founding of the Church the Lord showed the Apostle Peter:

Acts 10:11-16 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: {12} Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. {13} And there came a voice to him, **Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.** {14} But **Peter**

sentence or formal decree (human or (particularly) divine *law*, individual or collectively), including the act, the place, the suit, the crime, and the penalty; abstractly *justice*, including a particular *right*, or *privilege* (statutory or customary), or even a *style*: - + adversary, ceremony, charge, X crime, custom, desert, determination, discretion, disposing, due, fashion, form, to be judged, judgment, just (-ice, -ly), (manner of) law (-ful), manner, measure, (due) order, ordinance, right, sentence, usest, X worthy, + wrong.

4 Sonlight.org Constable's Commentary on Deuteronomy

said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. {15} And the voice spake unto him again the second time, **What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.** {16} This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

“**Statutes**” never change – they are bound laws against evil. Neither Jew nor Christian can bow the knee to a false god in the name of tolerance. God's Commandment against idolatry stands forever. However “**judgments**” were commands specifically directed to God's particular people at that time of human history. The Jews could eat no meats declared to be “unclean” by God. The Church is under no such restriction. The Jews had to circumcise every male child by the eighth day following physical birth. The Christian need not be circumcised – we are under God's direction for the Church Age:

Galatians 5:6 For **in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.**

Galatians 6:15 For **in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.**

Because Christ has come “**you are now circumcised with the circumcision made without hands**” (**Colossians 2:11**). When you believed on Jesus many of the “**judgments**” that ancient Israel were under ceased for you. “**You are not under the Law, but under Grace**” (**Romans 6:14**). You are not under the

“judgments pertaining to Israel” but you are still under God's Statutes.

God's people are *never lawless*, but we serve a higher Law through Christ.

There are many who use Christianity as a cloak for their sinful ways. They believe that – once saved – they are free to sin with impunity. We must *never forget* that – as children of God – we are under the direction of God. We are never lawless.

God's People Intelligently Listen To God

FOCAL Deuteronomy 4:1 Now therefore **hearken**⁵, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do [them], that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.

Look at the first *action verb* in the above command. God's people are to **hearken** – to *hear intelligently what God has to say*.

The original text shows that this verb is *habitual* – Israel was to “**keep on intelligently hearing God**”.

5 Qal Imperative of H8085, שָׁמַע, shâma', *shaw-mah'*, A primitive root; to hear intelligently (often with implication of attention, obedience, etc.; causatively to *tell*, etc.): - X attentively, call (gather) together, X carefully, X certainly, consent, consider, be content, declare, X diligently, discern, give ear, (cause to, let, make to) hear (-ken, tell), X indeed, listen, make (a) noise, (be) obedient, obey, perceive, (make a) proclaim (-ation), publish, regard, report, shew (forth), (make a) sound, X surely, tell, understand, whosoever [heareth], witness.

Their focus had to be on *doing what God said when God said it in the way that God said it*.

If you have been saved by faith in Jesus, then you *belong to God*.

Psalms 100:3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

God made Israel – God made this Church. God saved Israel – God saved this Church. **He hath made us, not we ourselves**. When we begin to think “I am a self-made Christian” we walk a pathway that leads to utter destruction. God made me, and He can *unmake me*. We are **the sheep of His pasture**. God controls the pasture, the place of feeding and the place of life. We should listen to Him.

Israel was going into a land filled with gods and goddesses. She was going into a land filled with terribly lost people. Some of those people would be so degraded that they would sacrifice their children on the altar to their false gods. Some of these people would be gigantic warriors. Others would be better experienced and better equipped than the Israelites were. If Israel was going to win this land she would have to **intelligently listen to God at all times**.

Beloved, the enemy is bigger than we are. If we want to win this land for Jesus we have to do *exactly as God says when He says it in the way He says it*.

God's People Do What God Tells Them To Do

Secondly, we are to do what we have learned. God told Israel:

FOCAL Deuteronomy 4:1 Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do [them], that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.

There is a **doing** to faith. The *faith that saves always does*. You do not “do” to be saved. Israel was already saved from Egypt as she stood on the banks of the Jordan. But she would never *possess the land* if she did not **do**.

The Apostle James said:

James 2:14-20 **What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? {15} If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, {16} And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? {17} Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. {18} Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. {19} Thou believest that there is one God;**

thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. {20} But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

We who are Christians believe that **faith alone in Christ alone saves the soul**. The Scripture clearly teaches this:

Galatians 2:16 **Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**

If you have been saved, you were saved by **faith alone in Christ alone**. But the Scripture goes on to teach us that **true, living saving faith always works!** The Christian, saved by faith in Christ, does not shrink from serving the Lord. The Christian never shirks water baptism, for it is commanded by Jesus. The **deacon Philip** did not have to beg the **Ethiopian Eunuch** to be baptized. Once the man accepted Jesus Christ as Savior he, on seeing water, said to Philip:

Acts 8:36 ... **See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?**

Those who have been truly saved **truly do**, for true salvation *changes the nature* of that which is saved. The eagle cannot stay in the barnyard with the chickens, but **“must mount up with wings as eagles” (Isaiah 40:31)**. God's people have been radically changed by the Lord their God, and are expected to walk or live their lives

reflecting their changed status. The early Church, though persecuted by the unbelieving Pharisees, continued to serve the Lord. The Bible says:

Acts 8:1-3 ... there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ... and ... Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

The Christian Church – persecuted, plagued, and placed in prison, did not hide from their affliction. What does the Bible tell us?

Acts 8:4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

They that were **saved went every where preaching the Word of God.** Those who are truly saved by faith stand up for their Lord. They *do*, knowing that God expects it of them. They *do not fear man* who is mortal but lovingly *serve God Who is immortal.*

If Israel was going to take the Land that God promised them, Israel would have to **heed the Lord and do that which He commanded.** Jesus elaborates:

Luke 6:46-49 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? {47} Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: {48} He is like a man which built a house, and digged deep, and

laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. {49} But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

There is a hearing – and there is a doing. You are saved by faith, not by works – but once saved *you are ordered and ordained to work.* This is the teaching of God's Holy Word.

God's People Cling To The God Who Saved Them

FOCAL Deuteronomy 4:3-4 Your eyes have seen what the LORD did because of Baalpeor: for all the men that followed Baalpeor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you. {4} **But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God [are] alive every one of you this day.**

What is the best advice I can give to each and every one of you? **Cling to God. Draw close to Him at all times – this is the Way of Life.** Those who cling to God are blessed in this life. The first generation of Israel held on to all the wrong things, and as a result lost everything – even their lives. God says:

Matthew 11:28-30 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. {29} Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am

meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. {30} For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

The Lord wants to bless you, just as He wanted to bless Israel before you. Israel would not heed Him, would not serve Him, would not live in her faith – and thus lost everything. Let us follow the example of the early Church. If persecuted, cling to Jesus. Hear His Voice. Walk where He says walk. Do as He has bid you to do. Read His Word. Speak to Him moment by moment.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.



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