

## **"What is theistic agnosticism / agnostic theism?" (Student Copy)**

We begin tonight's lesson with a question that was asked during our previous class. I apologize for not seeing it earlier.

This is in regards to people who repeat biblical sounding although not biblically sound phrases. This is the question asked: *"When you tell someone to find it in the Bible, what do you say to those that make the excuse that the Bible has been changed and rewritten so many times by different people?"*

*That is a great question!"*

Answer:

- Ask them to prove, give proof of when and where it (the Bible) was rewritten.
- Ask them to show where they have found evidence that the *"original manuscripts"* have been rewritten?
- Ask them to point out where the differences or changes are?
- We ask this of them because if the Bible has be "rewritten," as they claim, then they would have to read all Bibles to find out where the changes are they are talking about.
- The fact is their issue may be they are reading the wrong translation of version.
- That being the case, you cannot condemn what you are reading without investigating or putting the effort into finding out the truth.

- And without examining the truth, they are guilty of the very thing they are accusing the Bible writers of doing.
- More than likely a person will admit (not verbally) that they are repeating what they have heard someone else say.
- If that is the case, then what makes them, the person, or persons they received the information from so reliable that you trust what they say?
- They can't have a valid argument against or for something and use the excuse, *"Well, I can't show you because it has been rewritten and changed so many times."*
- If you have never read it, (the Bible), how do you know it is changed or even rewritten?

### **"What is theistic agnosticism / agnostic theism?"**

*Theism is a belief in a god or gods, and agnosticism is the belief that a god's existence cannot be known with surety.* Theistic agnosticism or, as it is more commonly known, "agnostic theism" seems to be a contradiction in terms.

To give a summary definition of agnostic theism would be as follows: *"A belief in the existence of a god held simultaneously with an uncertainty of any god's existence, with doubt that such existence could be proved, or the mistrust that any god can be fully known."* Agnostic theism has elements of personal faith, but it remains uncertain as to the validity of faith's claims in the absence of tangible evidence.

**"What exactly is an unbeliever?"** A "believer" is a child of God, born again by faith in Jesus Christ; and simply stated an

“unbeliever” is someone who does not believe in Jesus. In the New Testament, the Greek word is translated “unbeliever.” Its adjective form literally means “not faithful,” and it describes someone lacking in Christian faith. There is a clear distinction throughout Scripture between those who follow Christ and those who do not follow Him. The word unbeliever was understood to represent everything opposed to Christian faith and godliness. **2 Corinthians 6:14–15**. Those who had come to faith in Christ were being transformed into the image of Jesus as stated in **Romans 8:29**.

In regards to salvation, the word believe always implies far more than mental agreement with truth. **John 3:16; John 14:1; 1 John 3:23**. Satan and the demons know more than any of us the facts about Jesus, the meaning of His death and resurrection, and the truth of Scripture. **James 2:19**.

A believer is one who has transferred ownership of his life and future to the lordship of Jesus. **John 15:14**. A believer looks to Jesus alone for salvation from sin and hell. **John 14:6; Matthew 10:28; Romans 10:13**. Not all call on Him in faith. **Matthew 7:21–23**. The person claiming salvation while lacking evidence of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit is still functionally an unbeliever. When Scripture compares believers with unbelievers, it highlights the lifestyle differences. Believers are to be known by their love (**John 13:35**), their holiness (**1 Peter 1:15**), and their desire to be like Christ (**Ephesians 4:15**).

According to the whole of Scripture, it is not possible to be a true believer and continue the ungodly lifestyles that warranted

God's wrath in the first place. ***Ephesians 5:5–7***. This is due to the fact that salvation results in a new nature as stated by Paul in ***2 Corinthians 5:17***. Born-again hearts cannot remain in sin for long due to their new nature. ***1 John 3:6; 1 John 3:8–10; Hebrews 11:6***. They are still dead in their transgressions and sins. Unbelievers still bear the full weight of all their sin, we learn this from ***John 3:36; Romans 5:10***).

Let me remind and correct you of something I am certain you have heard before. It was Benjamin Franklin, not Jesus, who said, *"God helps those who help themselves."*

The Bible does say that God is beyond our ability to fully know Him: ***Psalms 145:3; Isaiah 55:8–9; Romans 11:33–34; 1 Corinthians 2:10; 1 Timothy 6:13–16***. The knowability of God is a divine gift that enlivens faith through the working of God's grace in the human heart. God is most fully revealed in Christ Jesus. ***Jeremiah 9:23–24; 1 Corinthians 2:2; Galatians 6:14; John 17:3; Hebrews 8:11–12; 1 John 4:7–8***.

While there are many professing Christians who claim to believe in God, many of them act as if He does not really exist. They clamor for the things the world offers and pursue the same life of those who have no faith. They do not know what the Bible says about God, so they settle for a form of agnosticism while denying the certainty of God's revelation of Himself. And then are dumb enough to think that God is supposed to bail them out of that mess tax free. Paul is absolutely correct: ***2 Timothy 3:5 (NET 2nd ed.) 5 They will maintain the outward appearance of religion but will have repudiated its power. So avoid people like these.***