

Prayer List of the Sick and Afflicted:

Liz Sturgill is still struggling but continues to receive dialysis treatments.
Jeff Sturgill has a sore on his foot but is now doing better.
Jesse Riddle is experiencing weakness but is able to attend Sunday AM services.
John Richardson is recovering from gall bladder surgery.
Shirley Cook's nephew in Illinois, Dale Pflum, is suffering from cancer.
Karen Sproles is doing better and hopes to have a nerve block injection in her knee soon.
Karen Sproles son, Chester, was in the hospital recently suffering from back problems, but is now back home.
Nan Coons, wife of Darian and daughter-in-law of Eldon and Glenda Coons was discharged from Vanderbilt hospital. She is home and now able to eat without issue.

Pray For Our Shut-Ins:

Gloria Hale, Karen Sproles, Iris Hash, John & Terry Richardson

Pray For The Mission Works We Are Supporting:

John Grubb (Mission work in Asia), Daniel Goshorn and family (Mission work in Peru). See latest mission reports on the bulletin board in the back of the auditorium.

2024 Men and Women's Planning Sessions:

On Saturday, January 20th the men and women will meet for breakfast at 8:00 AM at the building. Following breakfast, the men and women will have separate planning sessions to determine the works that we will pursue for 2024.

Men's Business Meeting:

The next men's monthly business meeting will be Wednesday, February 8th at 5:00. There will be no business meeting in February due to the January 20th planning meeting.

Monthly Pitch-in Dinner:

Our next pitch-in dinner will be today, following the AM services. Following the dinner, we will meet at 1:00 PM for a service in song.

Radio Program:

Please remember to tune in every Sunday morning at 8:00 AM to WCBK 102.3 FM to hear our radio program which is entitled: "Preparing For Eternity".

God's Plan For Our Salvation

Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
Faithful Christian Living, after the above five steps (I Peter 2:11, 12; Rev. 2:10)

January 7, 2024

MORGAN STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST

**540 E. Morgan Street
Martinsville, IN 46151
(765) 342-6027**



Schedule of Services:

Sunday

Bible Study – 9:30 AM
Worship – 10:30 AM
Evening Service - 6:00

Wednesday

Bible Study – 6:00 PM

Thursday

Ladies' Bible Study – 11:00 AM (March through October)

Radio Program:

"Preparing For Eternity"
Sunday Mornings 8:00 AM, WCBK 102.3 FM

Website:

www.morganstreetchurchofchrist.org

Gospel Preacher – Bob Hawkins

FATALISM (WHAT WILL BE WILL BE)

Those who believe and obey will be saved. Those who don't obey will not. Man has the right to decide in which group he will be.

There are doctrines and philosophies that contend neither we nor God can or will do anything to affect what happens. This idea is so absurd, contrary to history, contrary to reality, but most importantly, it is contrary to the Bible. It is difficult to know where to begin our discussion.

You deserve no credit for whatever you do because you could not help yourself—you just had to do it because it is fate that forced you. It was already set beforehand. God had nothing to do with it. The philosophy of fatalism denies the existence of God. Without God there obviously is no providence of God—which the Bible teaches.

Fatalism is a doctrine that all events occur according to a fixed and inevitable destiny which individuals neither control nor affect. The future, therefore, is fixed irrespective of our attempts to affect it. Preceding events have no connection with events that follow. All happens according to natural law. Nothing is conditional. No God is involved anywhere at anytime. So is the Fatalism doctrine.

Closely related is the philosophy of Determinism—a belief that all physical events and human actions are determined or settled by external forces before they happen. The external forces are the stars, planets, elements of earth, sun, moon, etc. This doctrine may or may not include the existence of God, but He is inactive. Everything is in accordance with some mysterious decree issued by some mysterious power perhaps ages ago. It denies there has been or can be anything miraculous.

Another similar doctrine is Predestination. This is a belief in fate or unchangeable destiny, inescapable, but is determined by God, even the salvation or condemnation of each individual. "He that is born to be hanged shall never drown." That's the idea. In religion, it is one point in Calvinism that says God determines which individual will be saved or lost before he/she is born and man has no power whatsoever to change what God has determined.

EXPRESSIONS THAT REFLECT THIS IDEA

People may say they do not believe these doctrines but they speak phrases that promote them. "His time has come." "This was meant to be; or not to be." "If the Lord wills," as if God forces something according to a fixed determination. "Whatever will be, will be," as if everything is already set and we are just waiting for it to happen. "Your days are numbered," as if it is already decided how many days you will live even before you're born. The Horoscope is based on some external forces on human activity. We just need to accept whatever it tells us because that's it. It is so much silliness.

Then why discuss it? It's against the Word of God, that's why. We shall show how it denies the providence of God and contradicts several Biblical points, including God's providence. It denies the nature of man and his power of choice or volition. That means man is not responsible for what he says, does or thinks and therefore not accountable. (This is what the advocates of Fatalism really want).

THE GOLDEN BULLET OF DEATH TO FATALISM

Before we consider the Scriptures, consider one very logical, sensible point. Advocates of these philosophies busy themselves in teaching others about them and trying to persuade others to accept them. Why do they do that? They have already proclaimed we cannot decide! They have said nothing we do or don't do effects anything! How can anybody choose to believe in Fatalism when you have no power of choice? It is already settled. You can't change it. What do they expect to change by teaching it? Any philosophy that contains within itself its own destruction is not deserving of acceptance.

FATALISM OR THE GOSPEL

You cannot believe both. The Gospel appeals to man to make a willful decision to come to Christ for forgiveness of his sins. He can determine his own destiny by what he decides to do regarding Christ.

GOD'S PREDESTINATION

Some things have been predestined and some things still are. Elements of truth in false doctrines are how they gain attention. The scheme of redemption is according to God's eternal purpose (Eph. 1:3; 3:11). The Biblical doctrine regarding salvation is that God has already determined who will be saved and lost; not according to individuals, but according to classes of people. Those who believe and obey will be saved; those who don't obey will not. Man has the right to decide in which group or class he will be.

Some have been heard to suggest that maybe God will not condemn anybody after all. Where do they get such tripe? They obviously do not believe "thus saith the Lord." In some unexplained manner they have become wiser than God regarding what He "might" do even though it is contrary to what He has said He will do.

The Bible is replete with prophecy and fulfillment. Sometimes the prophecies are conditional and

sometimes unconditional. Those that are conditional are not settled until the conditions are either met or discarded. There is validity in cause and effect (Gal. 6:7-8).

The providence of God has been predetermined (Matt. 6:33). But this is conditional, isn't it? People are taught to obey the Gospel. How can they if they have no power of decision that affects things?

It is predetermined all shall be resurrected and judged. Nothing man can do will alter that. Physical death is inevitable (Heb. 9:27). The day of the Lord will come (2 Peter 3:1). That will be.

Peter says the end of our faith is the salvation of our souls (1 Peter 1:9). What if one has no faith? Will he be saved anyway?

FATALISM IS IDOLATRY

Idolatry denies the true and living God and substitutes something else like the sun, moon, stars, mountains, animals, rivers, weather, etc. These things are in control according to Fatalism. Fatalists have goddesses that determine the course of human life and have special names for such things.

Fatalism violates the power of human choice. Yet, Moses made a choice (Heb. 11:24-26). Moses urged Israel to make a choice (Deut. 30:19). Elijah called for a choice (1 Kings 18) at Mt. Carmel. Joshua said, "Choose ye this day whom ye shall serve" (Josh. 24:15). But he was not as "schooled" as fatalists today and didn't know that was impossible. Agrippa had a choice after hearing Paul preach (Acts 26). We have to make a choice whether to believe the Bible or some fatalist who has made the choice to accept Fatalism.

WHY FATALISM IS DANGEROUS

Fatalism denies man is responsible for what he does. That leaves the door wide open for him to do whatever he wants because, "I couldn't help it. It was already determined." Man does not want to be accountable to God or anybody else. He wants "freedom" to do whatever he wants to do—answering to nobody. It is the same reason people are atheists. But doesn't the Bible teach there will be the Judgment (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12; Rev. 20:12)?

We cannot believe Fatalism and the Bible at the same time. Therefore, this doctrine denies anything is immoral, religiously wrong or ethically corrupted. How could it be? It is already set. Morality involves choice, standards and conditions. Excuses must be condoned that say, "I can't help it." Yet, Scripture teaches a difference between right and wrong, righteousness and unrighteousness.

More deadly, Fatalism denies the providence and power of prayer. What good would prayer do if nothing we or God can do to change whatever has already been decided? We may not know all we would like about the providence of God and how He operates in every case. But He has said He does and that prayer is effective (James 5:16-18) and teaches us how to pray.

SUMMARY

If Fatalism is true, nothing matters. We are just robots programmed to carry out what some power has determined. Nothing is intentional, accidental, coincidental or by choice. It is useless to preach the Gospel and the invitation from Christ is a farce. The cross was for no purpose; mercy is invalidated; grace is foolishness; obedience of no value; promises are null and void; blessings are ruled out; life has no meaning, purpose or goals; there are no standards to follow and we are without hope. What a glorious situation!

Furthermore, Fatalism offers us nothing in return for all we have lost in burying Christianity. It is totally negative and destroys everything Christians consider worthwhile. All we can do is just "live it out."

THE FOLLY OF FATALISM ILLUSTRATED

What would be the use of playing a game if the winner is already determined? We are like watching a re-run of a game already played and the winner has already won. The truth is God's Word and God's Word is truth. Fatalism is of the devil and cannot be believed. Maybe it has been fatalistically determined. I stop at this point.

-- James W. Boyd