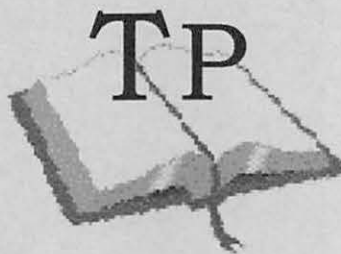


# *Thrasher-Davis Debate*

Will Everyone Be Eternally Saved?

Myles Davis  
&  
Thomas N. Thrasher



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## Introduction

Controversies among people of different religious persuasions have occurred throughout history, even in New Testament times (e.g., Acts 6 and Acts 15). At one time, most religious groups had representatives who participated in public debates defending their various viewpoints, including Universalists. Unfortunately, that is no longer the case. Today, the vast majority of religious leaders disapprove of debates for various reasons. Of course, this viewpoint stands in contrast to the examples of men such as the apostle Paul (Acts 19), Stephen (Acts 6), Jesus (Matthew 22), and others who are "set for the defense of the gospel" (Philippians 1:7, 17). This book preserves the record of a debate on the issue of universal salvation. The publisher recommends that the reader study this material by "searching the Scriptures" to determine whether these things presented by Myles Davis and Thomas N. Thrasher are so (Acts 17:11).

Myles Davis was born on August 26, 1990, in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, but he now lives in Inola, Oklahoma. He has participated in four formal religious debates. He has taken advanced studies in New Testament Greek, church history, and relationship counseling. He left the Church of Christ at the age of 19, and he was re-ordained and received the title Reverend. He has a fiancé, Shonda Maxwell, and soon-to-be stepdaughter, Rhialie. He is currently attending college in Pryor, Oklahoma, where he plans to become a barber while he raises his family.

Thomas Thrasher and his wife, Jerretta, have been married for more than 40 years. He began preaching the gospel in March 1966, shortly before graduating from high school. He has preached in 20 states and Australia, authored or co-authored 19 books, and participated in more than 100 formal debates. In addition to evangelistic labors, he has worked as a mathematics teacher, school administrator, or university professor for 39 years. He is currently a professor of mathematics education at the University of West Georgia. He has earned B.S., M.Ed., Ed.S., and Ed.D. degrees in the field of education. One of his on-going projects is *The Encyclopedia of Religious Debates*, a six-volume series on religious debating.

"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

## Agreement

1. Myles Davis and Thomas Thrasher agree to participate in an email debate on the following proposition: "The Bible teaches that all human beings will be eternally saved." Myles Davis will affirm and Thomas Thrasher will deny.

2. The debate will consist of six written articles—three affirmative articles by Myles Davis and three negative articles by Thomas Thrasher. The participants will alternate articles, beginning with the first affirmative and closing with the third negative.

3. Each article will contain a maximum of 2000 words, as counted by standard word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word).

4. The participants agree to submit each article by email within two weeks of receiving the opponent's article by email. If circumstances necessitate a short delay beyond two weeks, the opponent will be notified by email to that effect and an expected date specified.

5. The participants will conduct themselves as gentlemen, complying with Hedge's Rules of Debate.

6. The participants agree that the debate may be published online or in book form provided that it is reproduced in its entirety without alteration of the original articles, unless mutually agreed upon by the participants.



Myles Davis



Thomas N. Thrasher

## Proposition

"The Bible teaches that all human beings will be eternally saved."

Affirm: Myles Davis

Deny: Thomas N. Thrasher

## Davis' First Affirmative

Before I get into the questions that Thomas has given me, I would like to set the foundation of my new found faith. In doing so, I will also try to define the proposition as it is my job as the affirmative writer. The first thing I would like to point out is, I take the Bible very seriously, just not literally. I see it for what it truly is in my mind: A book about God; written by men to try to define God. However, to define God limits Him as well as His powers. I do not believe in the Bible as absolute truth, and therefore infallible. Rather, I see it as subjective truth. Therefore, I believe it to be infallible to only those who allow it to be within their minds.

I find it hard for the human who is trapped in time to be able to comprehend things such as eternity. How can we have a grasp on morality when we ourselves are so impure? At least that is what the Bible leads us to believe. I also do not believe the Bible to be truer about God than any other "holy book." This might lead one to ask how I could debate such a proposition. For clearly the Bible, if taken literally, does not teach my position. However, if we look at it more subjectively, I believe it will paint a different picture. This will be my goal within this debate, for the literal or letter kills, but the spirit gives life.

Some have asked me how I can justify taking some parts of the Bible and not the rest. I reply with: I try to find the moral truths and leave out the mysticism. As a young minister, I allowed my pride to get the best of me. I grew up in a conservative Christian Church called the Church of Christ. I know its creed and have read its Holy Book (the Bible) 17 times. I know their arguments better than most, and can debate their doctrines with the best of them. I have studied their history and know the God logic (theology). It was from this environment I grew a love for Hell. I once wrote a sermon titled, "I will scare the Hell out of you." It was from this sermon I found this quote. "The Bible commands us to assemble on the first day of the week. Some have it in their minds that they don't have the time to come to Church. That's okay; they will have a

lot of time to think about it as they burn in Hell." The idea of Hell was made for one purpose: to gain power. What better way for someone to do what you say than to use something they don't know about? This, of course, being the afterlife. If we can make an idea that says if you agree with me, you will not be tormented. Of course, they will agree with you. This is how religion has taken over the world. It is this concept that forces me to believe against the God that is defined by me using the Bible.

Now that I have shown you what I don't believe, let us look at what I do believe to be true.

### **Philosophy Behind My Beliefs**

Can we know truth? The answer is yes, but my truth is not your truth. The reason for this is because of the major principles of truth. The first principle is, truth is based off our reality and environment.

1. I believe Hell to be a physical separation from God. Therefore, this leads me to conclude that we are in Hell as we live our lives on earth.

2. I believe we are all equal in the sight of the creator, no matter what you call him, or how you worship him.

3. I believe we are all children of God, and made in His image. I believe we are a part of Him. Therefore, I believe we are just as much deity as Jesus Christ.

4. I believe we have made a covenant or contract with creation to be created. I believe the creator made natural law. We know this as science. This means I do not believe we are a victim of fate, but rather, whatever we are going through we signed up for it.

5. I believe that sin is missing the mark. I believe the mark that we all miss and fall far short of is the glory of God. What is the glory of God? I believe it is to love each other. I believe everything we call bad or evil is just us not loving our fellow man. Therefore, instead of judging as religion would have you do, I believe in loving everyone with God's love.

6. I do not believe in evil, for the Bible says that God made everything, and John goes on to say everything he made was good. So what is evil? I believe it to be the misunderstood part of good. The part without love.

### **Thomas' Questions with My Responses**

1. Are there any conditions that must be met by "all human beings" in order for them to "be eternally saved"? [I believe that we are all made as a part of God, for, He made us in His image, and we are his children.

Therefore, I find it to be the case that once we die we transition to once again be back with him. The only condition is to be made.]

2. If "all human beings" will "be eternally saved," what did Jesus mean when He said, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46)? [Let me first start by saying to be a Universalist you lose your faith in Jesus. I am not a Christian according to the modern definition of the term. Do I believe Jesus was the son of God? Yes. Do I believe he was deity? Yes. However, I believe that we have as much deity as he had. Do I believe he saved our souls? No. I believe that Hell is a physical separation from God and we are in it now. Therefore, it doesn't really matter what one man said. I am just as much "God" as he is.]

3. If "all human beings" will "be eternally saved," what did the apostle Paul mean when he wrote, "... when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)? [Why must God save us from God? If we do not obey him, we will burn. If Thomas is right, none of us will make it, "for all have sinned, and missed the mark." The question is: what is the mark? The answer is love! For as Jesus said, love is what it's all about. However, how can I be more loving than God? I would never send my child to burn forever. I would kill for my little girl, not kill her. How can God be so unloving that he would send his children to burn?]

4. If "all human beings" will "be eternally saved," what did the apostle Peter mean when he wrote, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Peter 2:9)? [This again is saying as all his other questions that the Bible is never wrong. I just disagree with this idea. Maybe Thomas can prove the Bible is never wrong.]

5. Who will be "cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15)? [Did Jesus save all men? Did he die for all sins? According to the Bible he did, but according to Thomas he didn't].

### **My Questions to Thomas**

1. What makes you better than the sinner who is without Christ?
2. What is true love; and can we love more than God the Father?
3. How much sin will send you to Hell, and what must one do to be sent there (Hell)?

4. What is the grace of God, and who will receive it?
5. What is it we are to be saved from?

### **Morality of Religion**

I believe to receive your morality from "religion" has stupidly taken seed all over this world. For even nature has a different understanding on morality than Christianity (as Thomas defines it). For example, when the female clown fish dies from having babies, the male changes its sex and becomes a female. Where does the Church stand on sex changes? The female wolf spider after having birth eats the father wolf spider. I would ask what the church thinks about cannibalism? However, they partake in it every Sunday when they come to eat Jesus' body, and drink his blood. By the way, how does that help save souls? Many animals such as the bottlenose dolphin are known to have homosexual relations. We all know how the Church feels about those with their constant crusades against the gay community. According to the Bible it is a sin to kill, yet God sent his "only" son to die for the world. Did God sin?

There are many things within the doctrines of men that misuse of our "holy books." We all need to step back for a minute and ask who are we really helping. The truth is we aren't helping anyone, only feeding the fires of Hell we live in each and every day.

## Proposition

"The Bible teaches that all human beings will be eternally saved."

Affirm: Myles Davis

Deny: Thomas N. Thrasher

## Thrasher's First Negative

I am grateful, as always, for the opportunity to discuss God's word. This is a serious responsibility in view of the inspired writer's observation: "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment" (James 3:1). For conciseness, I will refer to Mr. Davis as "Myles" in my articles.

Because I am in the negative, I will focus most of the attention in my three speeches on Myles' attempt to prove his proposition. However, I think it is also appropriate at the beginning to make my own position clear. Consequently, I want to demonstrate that the **opposite** of Myles' proposition is true—"The Bible teaches that all human beings will **not** be eternally saved"! (Note: The **bold print** in this speech is my emphasis.)

Daniel 12:2, "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and **everlasting contempt.**"

Matthew 18:8, "It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the **everlasting fire.**"

Matthew 25:30, "...cast the unprofitable servant into the **outer darkness.** There will be **weeping** and **gnashing of teeth.**"

Matthew 25:41, "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, '**Depart from Me,** you **cursed,** into the **everlasting fire** prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

Matthew 25:46, "And these will go away into **everlasting punishment,** but the righteous into eternal life."

Mark 3:29, "...he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to **eternal condemnation.**"

John 3:36, "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the **wrath of God** abides on him."

Romans 2:5-9, "But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself **wrath** in the **day of wrath** and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who 'will render to each one according to his deeds': eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—**indignation** and **wrath, tribulation** and **anguish**, on every soul of man who does evil."

Ephesians 5:6, "...because of these things the **wrath of God** comes upon the sons of disobedience."

Colossians 3:6, "Because of these things the **wrath of God** is coming upon the sons of disobedience."

2 Thessalonians 1:9, "These shall be punished with **everlasting destruction** from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power."

2 Peter 2:9, "...the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under **punishment** for the day of judgment."

2 Peter 2:17 and Jude 13, "...for whom is reserved the blackness of **darkness forever**."

Revelation 21:8, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which **burns with fire and brimstone**..."

These Bible statements are only a sampling of the many passages clearly demonstrating that **not** "all human beings will be eternally saved." Therefore, my opponent's position is false!

### **Myles' Questions and My Answers**

"1. What makes you better than the sinner who is without Christ?"  
Answer: I do not claim to be *better*, only **forgiven**. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Jesus came to "save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). "In Him we have redemption through His **blood**, the forgiveness of sins" (Ephesians 1:7). However, God does not force salvation on us; He invites (Revelation 3:20; Matthew 11:28-29). Sadly, some **will not accept** His offer of salvation. Jesus observed, "How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but **you were not willing!**" (Matthew 23:37). In order to be saved, we must **obey** the Lord! Jesus is "the author of **eternal salvation** to all who **obey** Him" (Hebrews 5:9; cf. Matthew 7:21; Revelation 22:14). Many do **not** obey (Romans 2:8;

Galatians 3:1; 5:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:8) and, consequently, are not saved.

"2. What is true love; and can we love more than God the Father?" Answer: The Bible says, "For **this** is the **love** of God, that we **keep His commandments**" (1 John 5:3); "**This is love**, that we walk **according to His commandments**" (2 John 6). Jesus said, "If you **love Me, keep My commandments**" (John 14:15); "He who has **My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me**. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him" (John 14:21). "But whoever **keeps His word**, truly the **love** of God is perfected in him" (1 John 2:5). Those who desire to please God are instructed to strive to be like God (e.g., 1 Peter 1:15-16; Philippians 2:5; Matthew 6:12-15). Love is one of God's qualities we should also have: "Therefore be **imitators** of God as dear children. And **walk in love**, as Christ also has loved us" (Ephesians 5:1-2). Obviously, we never attain to the perfection God has (Romans 3:23).

"3. How much sin will send you to Hell, and what must one do to be sent there (Hell)?" Answer: One unforgiven sin is evidently sufficient. Jesus said, "He who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit **never** has forgiveness, but is subject to **eternal condemnation**" (Mark 3:29). How many times would a person have to blaspheme the Spirit for this condemnation? Wouldn't **once** be sufficient? The apostle Peter told Simon after he sinned, "Repent therefore of **this your wickedness**, and pray God if perhaps **the thought** [singular] of your heart may be forgiven you" (Acts 8:22). Who will be eternally lost? The Bible says that anyone whose name is not written in the Book of Life will be "cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15).

"4. What is the grace of God, and who will receive it?" Answer: Grace is usually defined as God's unmerited or undeserved favor. **All** receive God's unmerited favor in some respects. For example, "He makes His **sun** rise on the **evil** and on the **good**, and sends **rain** on the **just** and on the **unjust**" (Matthew 5:45). However, those who receive God's grace in forgiveness of their sins are people who live according to God's commands: "For the **grace of God** that **brings salvation** has appeared to all men, **teaching** us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age (Titus 2:11-12). The Bible warns that it is possible for a person to insult "the Spirit of grace" (Hebrews 10:29), "to receive the grace of God in vain" (2 Corinthians 6:1) and to fall from grace (Galatians 5:4).

"5. What is it we are to be saved from?" Answer: Our sins (Matthew 1:21); God's wrath (Romans 5:9).

## Myles' "Proof" of His Proposition

By agreeing to affirm his proposition ("The Bible teaches that all human beings will be eternally saved."), my friend obligated himself to present **Bible proof!** He has failed miserably so far. Except for reproducing my questions, which contained Bible references, Myles gave not even **one** direct **Bible** citation in his **entire first speech!** How can he possibly think he proved his proposition from the Bible without even citing the Bible? The closest he came to offering Bible proof (as his proposition demands) were a few allusions to unspecified passages. Since that is the closest he came, I will comment on those.

Myles said, "The literal or letter kills, but the spirit gives life." I suppose he is referring to 2 Corinthians 3:6; however, if so, he has misunderstood it. In this context the "letter" is the Old Law ("written and engraven in stones," v. 7) and the "spirit" refers to the New Testament (v. 6). Regardless, the context does not teach "all human beings will be eternally saved," as Myles' proposition requires.

My friend stated: "I believe we are all ... made in His [God's] image." I suppose this is an allusion to Genesis 1:26-27. Of course, I agree that the Bible teaches this; however, that passage does not suggest that "all human beings will be eternally saved"!

Myles comments, "The Bible says that God made everything, and John goes on to say everything he made was good." The first part is taught in John 1:3 and other passages. I couldn't locate where John "goes on to say everything he made was good." Nevertheless, the Bible teaches God's original creation was "good" (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). However, none of that supports my opponent's proposition!

Myles asserted that "all have sinned, and missed the mark." Since he put that in **quotation marks**, I checked for the Bible passage, but I could not find that **quote** in any translation I have. Consequently, I would like Myles to tell me the **source** of his **quotation**. Nevertheless, as I have already shown, the Bible does teach that "all have sinned" (Romans 3:23; cf. Romans 3:9; 5:12). However, the fact that "all have sinned" **does not prove** that "all human beings will be eternally saved" (which is what the proposition obligates Myles to prove by **the Bible!**)

My opponent stated: "Jesus said, love is what it's all about." Once again, he did not provide a Bible citation, and since the Bible nowhere contains those exact words, I'm uncertain about his reference. Nevertheless, Jesus undoubtedly stressed the **importance of love** (Luke 10:27; John 13:35; 14:15, 14:21, 14:23; 15:10). He also emphasized the importance of **humility** (Matthew 18:4; 23:12; Luke 14:11; 18:14), **service** (Matthew 6:24; 20:27-28; Luke 4:8; 16:13; John 12:26),

**righteousness** (Matthew 3:15; 5:6; 25:46; John 7:24), and **truth** (John 4:24; 8:32; 14:6; 17:17; 18:37).

Among the statements Myles made in which I was particularly disappointed are these:

- "I do not believe in the Bible as absolute truth, and therefore infallible."
- "I also do not believe the Bible to be truer about God than any other 'holy book.'"
- "I believe that Hell is a physical separation from God and we are in it now."
- "I do not believe in evil."
- "I am not a Christian."
- "I believe we are just as much deity as Jesus Christ."
- "Do I believe he [Jesus] saved our souls? No."

It is certainly tempting to demonstrate the falsity of these claims; however, I will refrain for two reasons: I have insufficient space remaining in this article to elaborate on them, and **they do not prove his proposition** anyway!

Upon reading Myles' autobiographical comments, I regretfully conclude that he fulfills the apostle Peter's description of apostates: "For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: 'A dog returns to his own vomit,' and, 'a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire'" (2 Peter 2:20-22).

My friend devoted considerable attention to his personal "philosophy" and "subjective" opinions. Of course, he is free to believe whatever he chooses. However, his opinions or philosophy **do not prove** his proposition! The proposition he agreed to affirm is **not "Myles Davis' subjective opinion** is that all human beings will be eternally saved." I wouldn't have agreed to deny this! His proposition is **not "Myles Davis' philosophy** is that all human beings will be eternally saved." I wouldn't have denied this either! He was supposed to prove that **"The Bible teaches** that all human beings will be eternally saved." I recommend that he get busy attempting to prove **that!**

## Proposition

"The Bible teaches that all human beings will be eternally saved."

Affirm: Myles Davis

Deny: Thomas N. Thrasher

## Davis' Second Affirmative

Let me first start by fixing a mistake that Tom caught in his last speech. I made the statement, "I do not believe in evil, for the Bible says that God made everything, and John goes on to say everything he made was good." Tom noted he couldn't find where John said that. The reason is it was late and I got my argument backwards. I meant to say, the Bible says that all things God made were good, and John goes on to say everything that was made God made. Therefore, if God made everything and everything he made is good, what is evil? I believe it to be a part of good.

Tom has said I didn't use the Bible enough to prove my point in my last speech. There are two reasons for this. First, I was using that speech to explain what I believe and the next two to prove it. Also, I said 'the Bible teaches' because Tom is a Christian. If he was Islamic, I would use the Quran. If he was a Jew, I would use the Torah. I believe that there is truth in all "Holy Books" and none is greater than the other. For, I believe truth is subjective.

Now, we can't debate the issue of Hell without somewhat talking about the man who helps God run it. I have always wondered why God gave such powers to Satan. I also find it funny that when I left the Church they defended Satan's existence as much as God's. To look at such an entity as Satan, whoever or whatever he/it may be, I would like to look at Job. The story goes that Satan is roaming the earth trying to find people that will put up a fight (Job 1:6). Then while talking to God is given a gift by God. Why not go see if Job will fall? He fears me, and I will even let you do whatever you want except kill him (Job 1:8-12). Well, Satan kills his family, makes him sick, and forces him to have to put up with his so-called friends. Oh, and he loses all he owns. Hey, at least he doesn't die!

Of course, all preachers use this to praise Job for not backing down or giving in. However, hardly ever do you hear about God's role in this story. Let me shine some light on it for us. Tom is my best friend, and

has been there for me in the hardest of times. Now say Satan is a gay mobster. Now the story goes one day I have lunch with the gay mobster. For name's sake we will call him Snowflake. I tell Snowflake I have a great friend, so great that I will let you kill his wife, kill his kids, torch his home, and give him AIDS. However, you can't kill him. Let him know that I said it was ok, and he will still be my friend. Tom, would you still be my friend? Better question: Tom, would I be a good friend if I let this happen?

Now I would like to talk about another story in the Bible. To once again shed light on who God really is. In Ex. 3 and 4 we see God telling Moses to go to Egypt and free his people. However, in Ex. 4:24 we find God about to kill Moses for not cutting on his son's penis. By the way we are never told in the Bible of God commanding Moses to do this. Let's think about this for a moment. God is about to kill Moses who is going to free his people even though he doesn't want to. Before he gets there God comes to where he is lodging and is about to kill him for not doing what he didn't tell him to do. This is why God gave us women who can read minds. For before he kills him, Moses' wife cuts the foreskin off of their child. By the way, she uses a knife made of flint. That had to hurt. Here comes the best part: and rubs it on his feet. If I were Moses, I would be asking her to kindly take my son's penis skin off my foot because that is gross!

These are just two simple stories that we have heard over and over again. However, when we change the way we look at things, the things we look at change. It wasn't until I took a philosophy class in college that I looked at the Bible differently. My teacher told me to read the Bible as if it was any other book. After taking his advice, I understood why he didn't agree with it. I wish I had the words to go through more examples. However, I don't, and, therefore, I must press on.

I am afraid I have the upper hand in this debate, for I know how Tom will answer my questions. When asked what love is, Tom quoted the Bible. I want to reply in a way most would not. In psychology it is said before you can love anyone you must learn to love yourself. If you do not love who you are, you will judge how everyone else should be in your mind. These types of people try to fix what is wrong with everyone else, never once looking at what is wrong with them. In fact, the Bible talks about such people (Matthew 7:5).

Tom quoted from 1 John 2:5 which reads, "Whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him." However, I don't believe that even the God of the Bible holds up to this. For in Ex. 20:17, in giving of the ten commandments, it is said not covet. Yet before that in verse 5 we find God doing just that! He is

coveting over people who belong to other gods. We find this over and over again in the Bible.

Next God doesn't love Jesus. For Jesus said if you love me you will keep my commandments (John 14:15). Jesus commands us to love our enemies (Matthew 5:43-44). However, God holds grudges on millions of people, and is going to send them all to his customized torture chamber when they die! Therefore, my question to Tom is; how can God love us when he doesn't even love himself?

Now let's take some time to talk about Hell. In 1 John 2:2 the Bible says, "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world." Did John lie? Tom believes, as most Christians do, that there is victory in the death of Christ. They can believe this all they want, but the Bible says something different. In the end the Bible says God will lose (Matthew 7:13)! Matthew 16:18 says the gates of hell will not overcome (NIV). However, if Tom is right, a very few will make it.

Let me tell just who will not be in Heaven according to Tom's Biblical view. If you are a Jew, you will not because you do not believe in Jesus dying for your sins (John 3:16). Same for Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Wiccan, Satanists, Atheists, Scientologists, and all other non-Christian people. Now if you are a Catholic, you are going for sprinkling babies and not immersing adults (Acts 2:38). If you are a Baptist, you will go to hell for views on once saved always saved (Galatians 5). If you are a Pentecostal, your idea of the Holy Spirit will send you to burn (1 Cor. 13). If you are a woman being raped who prays to God without a hat on, you will go to Hell (1 Cor. 11). If you are a man who works in the army and pray with your helmet on, you will go (1 Cor. 11). Even if you are a member of the Church of Christ like Tom, and eat in the building you will go (1 Cor. 11). Oh, and by the way your faith in God means nothing, and according to Tom you do not love God because you don't obey Him! Just remember God loves you! By the way, for all of you who agree with Tom (conservative Church of Christ, or Antis), you better start agreeing on divorce so that someone can enjoy Hell. According to Tom it only takes ONE sin!

Let me real quickly repeat an argument in my last speech that Tom missed. This way he might deal with it this time. I believe to receive your morality from "religion" has stupidly taken seed all over this world. For even nature has a different understanding on morality than Christianity (as Thomas defines it). For example, when the female clown fish dies from having babies, the male changes its sex and becomes a female. Where does the Church stand on sex changes? The female wolf spider, after giving birth, eats the father wolf spider. I would ask what the church

thinks about cannibalism? However, they partake in it every Sunday when they come to eat Jesus' body, and drink his blood. By the way, how does that help save souls? Many animals such as the bottlenose dolphin are known to have homosexual relations. We all know how the Church feels about those with their constant crusades against the gay community.

According to the Bible it is a sin to kill, yet God sent his "only" son to die for the world. Did God sin? There are many things within the doctrines of men that misuse our "holy books." We all need to step back for a minute and ask who are we really helping? The truth is we aren't helping anyone, only feeding the fires of Hell we live in each and every day. It is Tom's job to answer this argument since he is in the negative. I hope he does this, for it is our morals that according to him will send us to burn forever!

The last thing I want to do is paraphrase something that was found in the Egyptian desert. This dates back to the time of the Essenes. This is from a man who has had a direct experience with God. He says, you split me and tore my heart open. You felled me with your love. You poured your spirit in mine. I knew you as I know myself. My eyes are radiant with your light, my ears delight in your music. My nose is filled with your fragrance, and my face is covered in your dew. You have made me see all things shiny; you have made me see all things new. You have given me peace and have become like paradise. When we can say this, we will have no need for Satan, or his Hell!

## Proposition

"The Bible teaches that all human beings will be eternally saved."

Affirm: Myles Davis

Deny: Thomas N. Thrasher

## Thrasher's Second Negative

I recognize my responsibility as a participant in this discussion. Consequently, I will do my best to uphold Bible truth, while also identifying errors in the argumentation of my friend, Myles Davis.

In his first speech Myles made some observations about the philosophy behind his beliefs, and in his second speech he mentioned that he had studied philosophy in college. Consequently, it would help us better understand his philosophical approach to the issue in this debate if he would answer some additional questions.

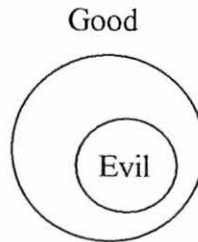
### Questions for Myles

6. Which of the following epistemological principles do you **accept**?
  - a. The law of noncontradiction
  - b. The law of causality
  - c. The basic (but imperfect) reliability of sense perception
  - d. The analogical use of language
7. Since you stated that "truth is subjective" (relative), do you believe that there is **any "absolute truth"**?
8. Do you believe each and every human being will have a **personal, eternal existence** in a place comparable to Heaven? If not, in what sense will "all human beings ... be **eternally saved**"?
9. Will **animals** such as clown fish, wolf spiders, and bottlenose dolphins "be **eternally saved**" in the same sense as the human beings in the proposition you are affirming?
10. You argued from the premise "**if** God made everything," perhaps suggesting that you doubt His creation (Genesis 1-2). Do you believe that "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1)? If not, how do you explain the **origin** of all things, including human beings?

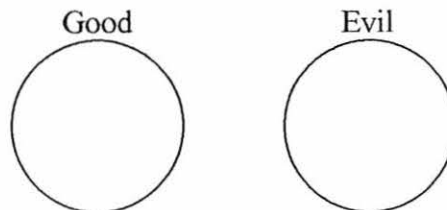
### Is "Evil" a Part of "Good"?

Myles asked, "What is evil?" He then offered his own (rather imprecise) answer: "I believe it to be a **part** of good." So far as I could find, he didn't specify or explain **what part!**

Representing Myles' idea with a Venn diagram, we have the following:



Everything inside the larger circle is "good," including "evil," which is simply "a part of good" (according to Myles). However, since my friend is supposed to affirming what "the Bible teaches," I challenge his answer because it is **contrary** to the Bible. Evil is **not** "a part of good"; evil is **distinct** from good. They are two entirely different things. Something good is not evil, and something evil is not good at the same time and in the same sense. The following diagram represents the Biblical (and correct) view):



Solomon's request of God was: "Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may **discern** between **good** and **evil**" (1 Kings 3:9). He evidently didn't know that evil is "a part of good"!

When King Ahab complained that Micaiah "does not prophesy **good** concerning me, but **evil**," he didn't realize that prophesying evil was actually prophesying good, because evil is a part of good! Later, Ahab said "to Jehoshaphat, 'Did I not tell you he would **not prophesy good** concerning me, **but evil**?''" In other words, Ahab knew that when Micaiah prophesied **evil** he was **not prophesying good**! Unfortunately, Myles was not there to correct Ahab by explaining that evil is just a part of good!

Commenting on the worthy woman's treatment of her husband, God's word says, "She does him **good** and **not evil** all the days of her life" (Proverbs 31:12).

When Nabal was described as "harsh and **evil** in his doings" (1 Samuel 25:3), I suppose that means he was really **good**, since evil is "a part of good"!

King Saul said to David: "You are more righteous than I; for you have rewarded me with **good**, whereas I have rewarded you with **evil**" (1 Samuel 24:17). If, as Myles contends, evil is a part of good, then Saul had actually rewarded David with good!

Joseph asked, "Why have you repaid **evil** for **good**?" (Genesis 44:4). How could people repay evil for good if evil is a part of good? Wouldn't they actually be repaying good for good?

God said, "Then you will remember your **evil** ways and your deeds that were **not good**" (Ezekiel 36:31). Clearly, "the Bible teaches" that **evil is not good**, contrary to Myles' contention!

God warned, "Woe to those who call **evil good**" (Isaiah 5:20), but that is exactly what Myles has done!

Jesus distinguished good and evil: "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done **good**, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done **evil**, to the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:28-29). Many more Bible passages could be cited as evidence that **evil** is **not** "a part of **good**," as Myles claimed. Nevertheless, he is supposed to be affirming that "the Bible teaches" his position.

My friend said that, according to the Bible, "everything he [God] made is good." As I responded in my first speech, "the Bible teaches God's **original creation** was 'good' (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31)." However, Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command (Genesis 3) and their sin brought evil into the world. Cain brought further evil into the world by murdering his brother (Genesis 4:8). Generations of humans continued to introduce more and more evil into the world: "Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). Consequently, God's original creation, which had been "very good" (Genesis 1:31), was corrupted by man's failure to obey God's instructions: "Therefore, just as through one man **sin entered the world**, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because **all sinned**" (Romans 5:12).

Myles describes Satan as "the man who helps God run" Hell. This view is quite common but erroneous. The Bible does not teach that God

has placed the devil in charge of Hell. To the contrary, Satan himself will receive the punishment of Hell: "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Revelation 20:10). In contradiction to my opponent's affirmation that "all human beings will be eternally saved," we learn that "anyone not found written in the Book of Life" will be "cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15).

Myles refers to the trial of Job's faith and the circumcision of Moses' son. Although Myles' remarks are inaccurate in several details, it is quite unclear to me what relevance they have to the proof of his proposition. By what kind of reasoning does my friend conclude that the events cited concerning Job prove that "all human beings will be eternally saved"? Similarly, how do the circumstances of the circumcision of Moses' son prove that "all human beings will be eternally saved"?

Nevertheless, I will make a few observations. With reference to Job's case, we have a specific instance of a broad topic that is commonly called "the problem of suffering." Many books have been written to address this issue of why suffering exists in the world (see William Lane Craig's *Hard Questions, Real Answers*, chapters 4-5).

People may suffer for various reasons.

- Suffering may be a result of **our own sins** (e.g., Cain, Genesis 4:8-13).
- Suffering may be a result of **the sins of others** (e.g., Abel suffered because of Cain's sin).
- Suffering may be a consequence of living in a **cursed world** (Genesis 3:17-19), which includes such disasters as hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes.
- Suffering may accompany the process of **aging** and **death** (Ecclesiastes 12:1-7).
- Suffering may be associated with **persecution** for righteousness' sake (Matthew 5:10-12; 1 Peter 3:14).
- Suffering may involve a **testing of one's faith** and faithfulness to God (Job 1; James 1:3; Genesis 22:1-12).
- Sometimes God **chastises** His children (Hebrews 12:5-11).

God may choose not to eliminate or terminate our suffering because some suffering may in fact be for our ultimate good (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

Joseph suffered (including being sold into slavery by his brothers and being imprisoned because of Potiphar's wife's lie), yet he later explained to his brothers that "God sent me before you to preserve life. For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting. And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt" (Genesis 45:5-8).

If we are faithful to God, despite the various sufferings that may come to us, God will provide an abundant and eternal reward: "For I consider that **the sufferings of this present time** are not worthy to be compared with **the glory which shall be revealed** in us" (Romans 8:18).

With reference to God's killing Moses for failing to circumcise his son, Myles asserted, "God ... is about to kill him for not doing what he didn't tell him to do." Actually, the commandment Moses had not obeyed was longstanding and well known to Israel (Genesis 17:10-27): "This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised: ... and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. ... And the uncircumcised male child ... shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

Myles is grossly mistaken when he accuses Christians of cannibalism "every Sunday when they come to eat Jesus' body, and drink his blood." We eat unleavened **bread** and drink **fruit of the vine** in **remembrance** of Jesus' body and blood, but we do **not** literally eat Jesus' body and drink His blood! Myles knows better, and I am disappointed that he would make this blatantly false charge!

My opponent lists several groups "who will not be in Heaven according to Tom's Biblical view." The fact is that "the Bible teaches" many will **not** be in Heaven (Revelation 21:8; Galatians 5:19-21; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9; Matthew 7:13-14). Jesus declared, "If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (John 8:24).

Myles says, "God holds grudges on millions of people." Untrue! God "is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Jesus identified the problem with people such as Myles: "You are not willing to come to Me that you may have life" (John 5:40). Jesus indicated His desire to save lost people when He said, "How often I

wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!" (Matthew 23:37).

My friend states: "In 1 John 2:2 the Bible says, 'He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.'" John is correct! Jesus died to make salvation possible for "all human beings." However, "He became the author of **eternal salvation** to all who **obey** Him" (Hebrews 5:9). Jesus will return "in flaming fire taking **vengeance** on those who do not know God, and on those **who do not obey the gospel**" (2 Thessalonians 1:8).

Myles repeats an "argument" he thinks is impressive: "Even nature has a different understanding on morality than Christianity." He comments on **clown fish, wolf spiders, and bottlenose dolphins**. Has my opponent forgotten his proposition? "The **Bible teaches** that all **human beings** will be eternally saved"! My friend can cite a statement found in "the Egyptian desert," but he can't cite a **Bible passage** to **prove his proposition!**

## Proposition

"The Bible teaches that all human beings will be eternally saved."

Affirm: Myles Davis

Deny: Thomas N. Thrasher

## Davis' Third Affirmative

Tom has created an illusion of victory. He has done this by not only demanding me to use the Bible, but also to use it as he interprets it. I do not share his fundamental and literal interpretation. Therefore, it seems that he has won in his last speech. However, if we look closely, we find his victory to be nothing more than a simple smoke screen.

In his last two speeches Tom has spent much time on my good/evil argument. What is evil? I believe it is the absence of love for our fellow man. The Bible calls it sin, or missing the mark as defined by the Greek. For example, to rape someone is to misunderstand the law of sex. Sex is not bad or evil unless it is done without the love for the fellow human. Murder is misunderstanding the law of death. Death is not bad or evil unless it happened without love for our fellow man. This is what I meant. This is what I meant by evil is the misunderstood part of good.

Now I would like to deal with something Tom brought up in his last speech. He put it into the form of a question when he asked me, "Since you stated that 'truth is subjective' (relative), do you believe that there is any 'absolute truth'?" My answer to this is, no, I do not believe there is one. The fact that there could be an absolute truth out there, and I could believe in it once I find it, even makes my answer non-absolute. This brings me to a problem Tom and I have. For Tom believes the Bible is an absolute truth. However, absolute means you can never change, and the Bible is always changing! How can it be an absolute and need translated? In the book of Matthew alone the KJV didn't translate of 400 words from Greek into English. I only attack the KJV because it is still the most used English translation. The fact is the Bible cannot be an absolute truth, but rather it is an evolving truth!

Now Tom didn't understand what I was trying to do when I quoted from Job and told the story of Moses. Let me start my explanation with a quote from Bishop Carlton Person, who said, "To define God limits God." What he means by this is, when we as humans define God, we limit his powers or his reactions to a human level. For example, God being angry

and merciful. These are two contradicting emotions we humans have. However, my God does not share this with Tom's God.

I do not use the Bible, which is other men's definition of God. To define who my God is I use my own logic and experiences with both life and God to define who God is for me. I use the Bible to better understand God, but not to define God. For example, the Bible calls God a Father, Him, or some other reference that would show God to be a male. I do not believe God to be a male nor a female. If God is greater than we are, and the Bible is right about God, why does it allow God to be defined as a male? Now Tom will show the relationship the man has over women according to the Bible to show why God is a male. However, I go to a beauty school where a woman is over me, so is the Bible wrong? Have the times and societies changed since it was written? Or is it still an absolute truth no matter what society it is?

Now the point I was making with the two stories was the Bible is subjective truth and not always right about who or what God is. Tom's only authority used to define his God is the Bible. My authority is anything I want it to be.

Now I want to now look at Tom's answers to my questions in the first speech.

1. I asked him, "What makes you better than the sinner who is without Christ?" He said, "I do not claim to be better, only forgiven." Is being forgiven not better? If it isn't better to be forgiven, why would we want to be forgiven?

2. I asked him, "What is true love; and can we love more than God the Father?" I will paraphrase his answer due to words. He basically looked at it from the human aspect showing to love is to obey. However, the point I was trying to make is: How is it that, if I had the ability as God does to not send anyone to Hell, I wouldn't. Remember God created Hell according to John. He also created the tree from which Adam and Eve ate, and knew they would eat from it.

Now Tom, like all Christians at this point, will argue free will, stating God gives us the choice to eat it or not, because he doesn't want robots. Without the choice there is no real love. There are some problems with this logic though. Problem one is, according to the Bible when we die we become robots if we go to heaven, for there will be no pain nor tears. It isn't love he wants but slaves! The next point is this argument is a cop out for God. It allows God to not take responsibility for his actions. For example, if my daughter is under the age of 18 and she doesn't go to school, I am responsible and the court can prosecute me for it. However,

with free will in place, God has no responsibility for his creation. He is allowed to make what he wants with no consequences to him.

The power of censorship is profound within religious ideology. In the book *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury takes on the idea of censorship. Though there is nothing "Holy" about this book, his philosophy is still of great importance. In the novel a man named Guy Montag is a firefighter who starts fires, burning books so that the people will not upraise in this censored society. That is, until he meets and falls in love with a young girl who shows him a time long ago—a time when they were allowed to see the beauty of things; a time beyond censorship. Though he never comes out to say it, Ray implies that all censorship is bad, for it holds society back. This is no more true than it is with religious demands. The censorship put on people through religious dogmas kills the identity and individuality of its members, whether it is through its creeds demanding them to do something, or its doctrines that demand them not to do something.

As a musician it was not until I left the Church of Christ that I was allowed to expand my musical abilities. This form of censorship has killed many vital years that I could have grown as a guitar player or one of the many other instruments I have played. However, with the Church of Christ there were many things I could not play due to their creeds.

His dogmatic ideas and philosophies are killing this world. People are dropping bombs in the names of God. We are the great Satan; they are the great Satan; and we kill each other. From the crusades to modern warfare, we still kill in the name of "God." Tom must be okay with these deaths, for many of them were done in the Name of the Christian God. To demand something means you have to enforce it. Tom must also be okay with the death of people after they die. At least Tom will find satisfaction in watching us evil people burn while he is in Abraham's bosom.

Thank you.

## Proposition

"The Bible teaches that all human beings will be eternally saved."

Affirm: Myles Davis

Deny: Thomas N. Thrasher

## Thrasher's Third Negative

My friend began by saying, "Tom has created an illusion of victory ... by ... demanding me to **use the Bible**" (emphasis is mine, TNT). Well, is that "demanding" too much? After all, the proposition Myles was supposed to affirm in this debate is "**The Bible teaches ...**"! I didn't force him to agree to affirm that. On September 30, 2010, Myles wrote, "I would be happy to debate that [the proposition]."

Myles added, "However, if we look closely, we find his victory to be nothing more than a simple smoke screen." First, I have no desire for a personal victory in this discussion, but a victory for truth over error! One of my favorite quotations is "*nothing suffers from honest investigation but error.*" Second, any decision concerning the merits of the arguments offered by Myles and me must be made by the individual reader. I lay no claim to achieving a victory over Myles; however, any reader who has gained a better understanding of God's revealed truth is a *winner*!

My opponent admitted, "In his last two speeches Tom has spent much time on my good/evil argument." True; however, Myles failed to attempt any substantive reply to what I presented! Rather, he merely repeats his assertion that "**evil ... is the absence of love.**" However, Myles said in his first speech, "**I do not believe in evil.**" Now he says that "evil ... is the **absence of love.**" Friend, notice your predicament. If you "do not believe in evil," then you don't believe in "the absence of love," for that is what you said **evil is**! If there is no evil, then rape and murder are not evil. I demonstrated that is not what the Bible teaches. However, you ignored all of the passages I cited.

In my second speech, I asked Myles **five** questions (#6-10). He completely ignored **four** of them! I can only speculate as to why he chose that course, but the reason certainly was not (1) because he had insufficient space, since he had almost 700 more words available, or (2) because he had insufficient time, since he had more than four months to consider his answers. I suspect that he knew that answering them would get him into trouble in this debate, so he ignored them.

Nevertheless, I commend Myles for answering #7: "Since you stated that 'truth is subjective' (relative), do you believe that there is **any** 'absolute truth'?" Myles' answer: "No, I do not believe there is one."

In view of his answer that **no absolute truth** exists, Myles cannot know that the following statements are absolutely true:

- $1 + 1 = 2$  (in the decimal number system).  
[Maybe  $1 + 1 = 3$ , if Myles wants it to be!]
- "Evil ... is the absence of love for our fellow man."  
[Myles said this, but it can't be absolute truth, for there is no such thing according to my friend!]
- "All human beings will be eternally saved."  
[Myles' proposition states this, but he can't know or prove it is true, because there is **no absolute truth!!!**]

My friend comments, "Tom believes the Bible is an absolute truth." Yes, I do! Of course, we must "handle aright the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). In prayer to the Father, Jesus said, "Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Psalms 33:4 declares, "For the word of the Lord is right"! Psalms 117:2 states, "The truth of the Lord endureth forever." Psalms 119:142 says, "Thy law is the truth." Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Unfortunately, some people have "changed the truth of God into a lie" (Romans 1:25).

Myles claims, "The Bible cannot be an absolute truth, but rather it is an evolving truth," because "the Bible is always changing!" No, the word of God is not evolving, but some who "are unlearned and unstable" twist the Scriptures "unto their own destruction" (2 Peter 3:16). Of course, our **English language** continues to evolve over the years, so new **translations** of God's word into English are useful. However, the word of the Lord endures forever (1 Peter 1:25).

My opponent quotes "Bishop" Carlton Person: "To define God limits God." Myles, is Person's view **absolute truth**? Obviously not, because Myles doesn't think there is such a thing. However, isn't an omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal God capable of "defining" Himself through His revelation?

My misguided friend explained, "I use my own logic and experiences with both life and God to define who God is for me." Therefore, to the extent that your "logic and experiences ... define who God is" for you, Myles, **you** limit God! What gives **you** the right to "define" God, but you refuse to accept what **God says about Himself** in the Bible?

I have no idea in what way Myles thinks it supports his proposition, but he states: "I do not believe God to be a male nor a female." Well, according to His word, God is **not a man** (i.e., a human being, cf. Numbers 23:19), but **He is a Father** (Malachi 2:10; Isaiah 9:6; 2 Corinthians 1:3). That's true whether you like it or not!

In response to my opponent's question ("What makes you better than the sinner who is without Christ?"), I said, "I do not claim to be better, only forgiven." Myles replied, "Is being forgiven not better?" Yes, being forgiven is a better spiritual state, but you asked about **my** being better. I was forgiven by the **grace** of God, **not** because I deserved or earned forgiveness (Ephesians 2:5, 8) or because I was better! "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). However, I accepted God's offer of salvation: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17). Sadly, some (like Myles) refuse it. Jesus said, "**Ye would not!**" (Matthew 23:37).

It might be worthwhile for me to remind the audience (and Myles) what he agreed to affirm in this debate, since you would never know from his speeches: "**The Bible teaches that all human beings will be eternally saved.**" I have been debating for more than 40 years, and I have never had an opponent who did a worse job of **attempting** to prove his proposition. I anticipated, prior to the commencement of this discussion, that Myles would cite **Bible passages** that **he thought** taught "that all human beings will be eternally saved." Universalist debaters of earlier generations at least made some effort to do that.

My friend suggested, "Tom's only authority used to define his God is the Bible." Actually, **God's creation** also provides knowledge about God (Romans 1:20; Psalms 19:1).

Myles admitted, "My authority is **anything I want it to be.**" Astounding! What if everyone had that attitude? Does Myles apply that type of reasoning to mathematics, science, history, or games? Suppose you were playing a game against someone who repeatedly violated the rules of the game (e.g., chess, tennis, baseball, football, etc.). What would you think if, when questioned about these rule violations, the response was, "My rules are anything I want them to be!" Well, the fact of the matter is that following **God's** "rules" is infinitely more important than the rules of some game, yet Myles thinks he can reject God's authority and substitute his own! My friend, I urge you for the sake of your eternal soul to give up your foolish notions and turn to the Lord!

My deluded friend expounds on "the power of censorship," but how does that prove "**all human beings will be eternally saved**"? That is what he is supposed to be proving!

Myles refers to the book *Fahrenheit 451* and says:

- "There is nothing 'Holy' about this book."
- "His [Bradbury's] philosophy is still of great importance."
- "The censorship put on people through religious dogmas kills the identity and individuality of its members."

By his own argumentation, Myles cannot know that a single one of his statements is true, because he has contended that there is no such thing as "absolute truth"! Since he contends there is **no absolute truth**, could it be that Myles' proposition ("The Bible teaches that all human beings will be eternally saved.") is actually false?

Myles complains, "As a musician it was not until I left the Church of Christ that I was allowed to expand my musical abilities. ... there were many things I could not play due to their creeds." If Myles is referring to some of the **ungodly and obscene lyrics** encountered today, then people who counseled him not to sing such songs were concerned for his soul's welfare (2 Corinthians 7:1; James 1:21; Colossians 3:8)! However, if he is suggesting that a Christian is not allowed to play musical instruments (even professionally) and "expand [his/her] musical abilities," then he is deceiving you. There are many fine musicians who are faithful members of churches of Christ. Personally, I played in bands for 10 years and enjoyed doing so. However, the Bible teaches that **singing** (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16), **not instrumental music**, is to be used in **worship** according to the New Testament (cf. 2 John 9; Revelation 22:18).

My bewildered friend has made numerous absurd statements during this debate. For example:

- "I believe it [the Bible] to be infallible to only those who allow it to be within their minds."
- "I also do not believe the Bible to be truer about God than any other 'holy book.'"
- "We are in Hell as we live our lives on earth."
- "We are just as much deity as Jesus Christ."
- "I believe that we have as much deity as he [Jesus] had."
- "We have made a covenant or contract with creation to be created."
- "I do not believe in evil."
- "I believe it [evil] to be a part of good."

- "According to the Bible when we die we become robots if we go to heaven."
- "It isn't love he [God] wants but slaves!"
- "My authority is anything I want it to be."
- "The Bible teaches that all human beings will be eternally saved." [Myles' proposition]

Truly amazing!

I regret that Myles' bitterness toward Bible believers has led him to make unkind and untruthful remarks such as the one with which he concludes his part of this debate: "At least Tom will find satisfaction in watching us evil people burn while he is in Abraham's bosom." I receive **no satisfaction** whatsoever in the suffering of lost souls; however, God has clearly described the certainty of that suffering:

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8, "When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, **in flaming fire taking vengeance** on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 5:6, "...because of these things the **wrath of God** comes upon the sons of disobedience."

Revelation 21:8, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which **burns with fire and brimstone**...."

Clearly, my friend Myles **has not proved**, and the Bible **does not teach**, "that all human beings will be eternally saved"! If his proposition had been "**Myles thinks** that all human beings will be eternally saved," I would not have agreed to deny it. However, he obligated himself to prove "the Bible teaches," and he has failed to do that!

Regardless of anyone's **opinion** on the issue, **the Lord said**, "And these [the wicked] will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew 25:46). Jesus is "the author of eternal salvation to all those who **obey Him**" (Hebrews 5:9). The Bible warns, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

May the Lord bless with wisdom and understanding those who seek Him with a sincere heart.

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