

BOTH / AND

(This handout is a revision of a prior 2016 blog titled, *Affirming BOTH “Either/Or” AND “Both/And”*)

In the context of acknowledging the reality of the “neither” option (that is, what could be interpreted as also including the *excluded middle* or, simply put, additional options other than the options currently being considered), AND as we wrap up* this focus on dangerous half-truths which have a significant bearing on end-time living, we need to reiterate our [Truth Foundation](#) : **God’s precious, explicit Word.**

To illustrate one aspect of epistemic (knowledge) pursuit ...

It’s NOT	EITHER	<i>Credo ut intelligam/intellegam</i> (“I believe so that I may understand” as expressed, in different forms, by Augustine and Anselm)
	OR	<i>Intellego ut credam</i> (“I think so that I may believe”)

It’s BOTH/AND. Both options are viable depending on the *need of the hour*. And both approaches (faith and reason) have strengths and weaknesses depending upon the context in which they are employed. From God’s worldview perspective, both human and divine sources of truth are usable (but again, note the strengths and weaknesses inherent in the methods of knowledge relied upon and weaknesses when they are put to use when engaging others!). And, obviously, there are other matters that play into this picture, matters like keeping an open mind so as to avoid the *excluded middle* fallacy.

Let’s move further into another illustration, one most practical in daily living but a matter which also highlights the limits of rational thought in that it includes – dare I say it – the **supernatural** ...

Theological constructs are usable BUT they often, not always, include hidden traps.

For example, it’s not **either** Calvinism **or** Arminianism ...
it’s not **either** faith **or** works ...
it’s not **either** Dispensationalism **or** Reformed Theology ...
it’s not **either** Free Grace **or** Lordship Salvation ...

These are codes/belief systems **of men** and each present imbalance IF seen/believed upon in an “either/or” manner. Instead of devoting our lives to *traditions of men*, let’s simply affirm the WHOLE Counsel of God’s Word.

Our Lord Jesus actually addressed this concern almost 2,000 years ago as recorded in the Gospels. Note, especially, His words to the religious leaders: “This people honors Me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching *as* doctrines the commandments of men.” (Jesus Christ quoting Isaiah 29:13 as recorded in Mark 7:6b, 7 – NKJV ; see also Matthew 15:1ff)

Application observation and appeal:

These contemporary belief systems of man, in whatever ways they are cast (e.g., in systematic theological expressions; in denominational dogmas, etc.), are often systems which emphasize only one side of a coin or only one facet of a **multi**-faceted diamond. So where do we find **balance** – balance which gets us past our puny selves?

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” Proverbs 3:5, 6 (NKJV)

As there are appropriate times to use either inductive or deductive reasoning, so too are there times to use the either/or approach as there are indeed, fallacious contradictions (e.g., “God exists and at the same time and in the same way, God does not exist.”).

As there are appropriate times to emphasize ALL of God’s attributes (and avoid, in this case, what could be a fallacy of emphasizing imbalance [e.g., “God is love but is not holy or just.”]), so too are there times to apply the both/and approach (again, noting the possibility there’s a third, or fourth, or ? ? option to consider in the full equation – and I’m not talking about math equations here!).

Here’s what we’re trying to say in all this:

Man’s puny perspective is so very INcomplete! God’s full revelation, on the other hand, is complete toward accomplishing His purposes – offering sufficient Truth to navigate the eternal, spiritual waters of life. This is one reason WHY we post quarterly Bible-reading blogs. God’s Word matters – [Truth Matters](#) !

Once again, back to a pressing example, this one regarding “Justification before God” ...

Is it Either/Or - Is it by faith alone – that is either by faith or by works – that one is made right before God?

OR

Is it Both/And ? - Is it by faith and works – that is, by an active faith that works after being born again and as we walk in the provisions of our new birth that one is made right before God?

On the grounds of explicit Bible data – which we’ve highlighted in prior blogs, ones which we’ve now [archived](#) (see blogs in 2015 – 2017 and commentary blogs in 2018, 2019) – the answer to the questions above is this: It’s clearly a Both/And reality. This both/and reality honors the many Bible passages stating one is justified by God through faith. John 14:6; Ephesians 2:8, 9; the justification truths expressed in the books of Romans and Galatians; Philippians 3:8-11; Titus 3:5; and MANY other passages are all affirmed. See our **Faith and Works** hand-outs (discipleship articles listed under handout #30) on our *gift page* at www.currentmatters.org.

Please hang in here as we emphasize a crucial point. ...

How is it we know WHEN to employ these different actions? “When should we use the ‘both/and’ or the ‘either/or’ approach?” is a great question one could (and should!) rightly ask. Please hear our appeal ...

God’s Word (the FULL Counsel thereof – as opposed to picking some verses and rejecting and/or reinterpreting others) offers humble subjects (who genuinely seek Truth) **His** transcendent insight. His Spirit also leads in Truth.

So when we address the *Cult of Unbiblical Grace*, for example, we are simply pleading with folks to accept God’s full revelation of grace, for God’s grace – I’ll say it again – is NOT exhausted at the cross! Our grounds for heralding the need for an active, working faith (as God graciously works in us both to will and to do His good pleasure) is explicitly biblical, one which affirms BOTH justification by faith AND justification by works wrought by/done by God. (John 3:21 – also see Galatians 5:22-25; Eph. 2:10 Titus 2 & 3 and many other passages which teach this: God calls and equips His new-born children in Christ to be about good, fruitful, honoring-to-God works ... even to the extent of James 2:24!) WHOA – and HE’s the One graciously doing them in and through us. What grace! (Paul testified of this very thing – see I Corinthians 15:10. This is so very cool. What grace indeed.)

This position is in direct CONFLICT with the traditions of the *Cult of Unbiblical Grace*. The *easy-believism*, the get-your-fire-insurance-and-you're-good-to-go attitude, the "No works" and the "Done, not Do" false teachings in many churches are half-Truth deceptions, ones which DENY the robust biblical data which affirms good works in/done by God. These unbiblical partial truths contribute to attitudes opposite the call of our Lord Jesus Christ! And do you know what He will tell some of these false teachers (who practice this partial-truth teaching) on the day of accounting?

I'm not giving my opinion here. This is fact: He'll actually say to some,

"I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" Matthew 7:23 (also read Revelation 2 & 3)

So you see, dear **followers** of the Lord of lords and King of kings – Jesus Christ – it's NOT a matter of "either/or" – either by faith or by works. It's both: Being made right before God by a faith that works as God brings fruit through our abiding. This is exactly what the narrative in Genesis 22 teaches. Read the text carefully. Yield to the teaching in God's Word – James 2:24 – by submitting to all the doctrine in this narrative ... including verses 15-19 of Genesis 22. Acknowledge how James clearly refers to this Genesis 22 paragraph in James 2:20-24.

While God rejects works of the law and works of the flesh as filthy rags before Him, He calls His people who are justified by Christ to be doers of the Word and not idle hearers only. The biblical doctrine of justification before God is both positional in Christ Jesus and progressive as we walk, abide and live out our faith in Christ as the Spirit of God works in us. The theological doctrine of *justification by faith alone* is unbiblical! You no doubt have seen our handout on dangerous traditions in the church today. If not, please [Click Here](#).

Sincerely: To hell with satan's ** cheap, deceptive half-truth lies in relationship to this crucial topic!

Let's affirm the whole Counsel of God on this matter of what it really means to be sincere practitioners – REAL, new-born followers of Jesus Christ.

Oh Lord God, maker of heaven and earth, holy Savior: We once again confess our perspectival sins which so easily beset us. Help us discern incomplete ideologies which deny Your Full-Truth Counsel. Help us to live the end-time theme of righteousness – both positionally and in practice – in this godless day. Help us truly live the sweet, abundant, God-pleasing life – the Romans 12:1, 2, Galatians 2:20 and 3:1-3 existence – as we abide in Your Son, as we walk in Your Spirit. *All glory, laud and honor: To THEE, Redeemer, King!* In Christ Jesus' holy name we pray. Amen

* Regarding "wrap up," we've [archived](#) 2015 & 2016 blogs on this matter of balancing the full Counsel of God.

** We do not capitalize his name intentionally – fallen angel that he is.

IF you are reading this article and you are not *in Christ Jesus*, please know: You must be born again. Please review our Good News pages by going to the [Gospel](#) section of our Current Matters web site.