

Why Do Few Remain Converted?

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THIS BOOKLET IS NOT TO BE SOLD. The information provided is for the benefit of former members of the congregations of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), and of current and prospective members of God's Church.

In the Worldwide Church of God it was taught that just about everyone would be saved except a few really bad people. This is certainly very encouraging but is it what God says in your Bible?

Preamble

Please Note: All comments in brackets [] or in parentheses () as well as highlighted text (bolded and/or in blue) are from the author of this study. Bible quotations are in maroon.

I think it is essential to clarify the question of the “Holy Spirit” before we begin this study. If we say that who or what is the “Holy Spirit” is the question that needs to be answered, we are starting from the assumption that there exists such a being as the Holy Spirit and that it is a separate and distinct being from God and the Word. The question which should be asked is who are the beings the Bible tell us are holy, whose composition is spirit and who have existed eternally? Either the Bible plainly tells us who are the separate and distinct beings that existed from all eternity who created all things (spirit beings and the material universe) or we have no way of getting an answer to our question.

The Holy Spirits of the God Family

The Bible tells us in Gen 1:1 that:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

The Hebrew word translated “God” is “Eloheem” which is the plural form of “Eloah which means “God”. The word “Eloheem” refers to “gods.” It is a uniplural noun like family, group, team, etc. In the beginning, there was therefore more than one God being in existence but how many were there?

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth there was God and there was another being with God who was also God, the Word. How can these two beings both be God; isn't that impossible?

The word God indicates the kind of existence of these 2 beings: their nature is to be God in the same way that all human beings have the same human nature. However, having the same nature does not mean that all human beings constitute a single being; indeed, they are all separate and distinct beings with their own personalities. God and the Word have in common the same nature or, level and type of existence, but they are separate and distinct beings just like all human beings who have the same human nature are separate and distinct beings.

God the Father

We read in the Bible that God became a father when the Word became flesh (Phi 2:5-8) by being born of woman after having been conceived in the virgin Mary by the holy spirit being called God (Luke 1:35). God from that point on became God the Father and the Word, who was born as the flesh-and-blood Jesus of Nazareth became God's Son or the Son of God. He was both fully God (his father was God and fully human (his mother was the virgin Mary).

Jesus was God the Father's only begotten son at the time when He was conceived in Mary's womb but He was not to be the only one begotten of the Father. God the Father is the holy spirit being in the Godhead that calls men to salvation.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Joh 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Joh 18:9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou [God the Father] gavest me have I lost none.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

God the Word and Spokesman

The Bible term for being called is to be spiritually begotten by God the Father (1Pe 1:3). When we are begotten, we become a spiritual embryo that can be born again as a glorified spirit being with eternal life. Those begotten of the holy spirit God the Father who follow their calling are then able to come to the holy spirit being called the Word and Spokesman (John 6:44; 65; 18:9) who then teaches them. The glorified Jesus-Christ as God the Father's Word and Spokesman is the holy spirit being that works in the minds of God the Father's called and chosen ones.

Joh 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Jesus had to first be glorified for it to be possible for Christians to have access to the holy spirit called the Word and Spokesman because the glorified Christ is the holy spirit being who works in the minds of God's saints (John 14:17) in the same way that Satan is the evil spirit that works in the minds of the children of disobedience (Eph2:2).

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he [Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [On the day of Pentecost, it would be in them and in all true Christians.]

Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, [Satan] the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

The holy spirit God the Father calls men and those who follow their calling are then taught by the holy spirit called the Word and God the Father's Spokesman.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Holy Ghost

The expression “Holy Ghost” used in the Bible is in error as there are no ghosts in the Godhead but rather 2 beings that are holy (John 17:11; Isa 6:3) and spirit (John 4:24).

Joh 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Isa 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy**, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Joh 4:24 **God is a Spirit:** and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

These 2 God beings who are holy and spirit are the holy spirit beings of the God family who existed in the beginning at the creation of all things.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And, the Word who was with God is before all things i.e., *nothing* existed before He created them whether made of spirit or matter.

Col 1:15 [Christ] Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

Col 1:16 For by him [the Word who became Jesus-Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

In the beginning before anything either physical or spiritual was created, there was God and the Word who existed before all things and no other being is mentioned as having existed with them. There is no bib-

lical evidence that there ever existed a third, separate and distinct personage in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit” who dwelt in eternity with God and the Word.

God is a Family

Throughout the Bible we can find many verses which clearly indicates the existence of family relations between God and the Word and God’s called, chosen and faithful.

Mat 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Mat 12:50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Joh 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

God is clearly a family in which many can be ultimately born again by a resurrection from the dead to eternal, glorified spirit life in God’s Kingdom.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [God’s Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Col 1:18 And he [the glorified Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Christ was the first to be born again by a resurrection from the dead to be followed by many brethren.

Bible Writing Convention

The practice in the Bible has been to simply use the expression “the Holy Spirit” without indicating which God personage in the Godhead the expression represents. Over time, because of this practice, just about everybody has come to believe that the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct God being in the Godhead but, there is no single verse or group of verses in the Bible that prove the existence of such a third being in the Godhead. The words “holy” and “spirit” are adjectives that describe the nature of

God the Father and of God the Word i.e., they are holy beings made of spirit.

Whenever we encounter the expressions the “Holy Spirit” or simply the “Holy Spirit” in the Bible we must look at the context to determine of which holy spirit being of the Godhead the Bible is talking about: the holy spirit, God the Father or the holy spirit, the Word and Spokesman.

The Word is the holy spirit being in the Godhead who carries out the instructions and wishes of the holy spirit, God. He is the faithful son who seeks to do his father’s will in all things. He is the member of the God family that did the work of creating the heaven and the earth, who ruled over ancient Israel through Moses and his human successors, He is the one who became a man who suffered and died to be God the Father’s perfect sacrifice for sin and make the salvation of mankind possible, etc. and He came to reveal the Father to those who follow the Father’s calling.

Making Things Clearer

In this study, when referring to God’s spirit who, depending on the circumstances can be the holy spirit personage called God the Father or the holy spirit personage called God the Word and Spokesman, I will not capitalize either of the adjectives “holy” and “spirit”. This is in order to not perpetuate the false impression in the minds of readers that there is a 3rd being in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit.” Instead, I will refer to either of the holy spirits in the God family as being God’s spirit without capitalizing the word “spirit” to make it plain that we are not referring to a third God being in the God family called the “Holy Spirit” but to one of the 2 God beings in the Godhead.

God’s family is presently made up of 2 holy spirit beings to which are to be added thousands and possibly millions of other holy spirit beings when God’s plan of salvation for mankind has reached its end. The saints that endure in the faith until the end of their natural human life, will be resurrected as individual holy spirit beings in God’s Kingdom when it is established.

There are two studies which you can read regarding what is the “Holy Spirit” and decide for yourself in light of the Bible-based evidence offered if such a being exists in the Godhead. These studies are: [What is the Holy Spirit? Cliff Notes Version](#) and [Who or What is the Holy Spirit?](#)

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In the Church there is this widely-held belief that just about everyone is going to be saved and that it is only a small core of stubborn individuals that will refuse to submit to God and that will lose their salvation. This thinking goes along the lines that God is all-loving and all-merciful and that we are all basically good people and that if we are not saved then we wonder who indeed can be saved. God is not a harsh and cruel tyrant and we will all but a very few really bad sinners inherit eternal life.

What does the Bible have to say on this topic and does it tell us the fundamental reason why individuals lose their salvation?

We Must Choose

God will not in any way or by any means force us to obey Him including making us suffer physical or mental torment to correct us.

Deu 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led [not forced] by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

God has decreed that we must freely and self-willingly chose to obey Him once the knowledge and understanding of the truth has been given us. And, we must keep on making that choice without coercion of any kind from God every day of our lives. He will simply not force us to obey Him and if we ever turn away from Him, He will not by any means force us to return to Him. We must choose and once we have made our choice, God has decreed that He will respect it even if it means the loss of our eternal life.

Every day and for the rest of our lives, we must, freely and self-willingly and in whatever state we may find ourselves (rich, poor, sick, healthy, old, young, happy, sad, etc.), be making the decision to obey God.

If ever we decide we no longer want to be in submission to God, then God will not force us back by trials or any other means for that matter.

God does not want servants who obey Him only because they are being tortured into obedience (physical and mental trials that God would send upon the disobedient servants or those of flawed spiritual character) or out of fear of being tortured. He wants servants that know and understand the truth and freely and self-willingly want to submit themselves to it regardless of the cost to themselves in this present life.

God's Correction

How does God correct us given that He will not force us to obey Him through fear of punishment and that He wants us to freely, without coercion of any kind, and self-willingly choose to obey Him after coming to the knowledge of the truth.

Let's see what the Bible has to say on the matter.

Heb 12: 5 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

6 For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

7 If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

8 But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partak-

ers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

9 Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

10 For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

11 Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

13 And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

In New Testament times, God is no longer dealing with a flesh-and-blood physical nation as in the days of ancient Israel but with a Spirit-begotten nation whose members are from all nations.

The chastening we receive from God is not being physically spanked, whipped or scourged as God will not by any means force anyone to obey Him.

What is the chastening that can rise to the level of scourging which true believers are to endure at the hand of God for their benefit and which so few have been able to endure and have become bastards spiritually-speaking i.e., God is not their father, they are of another father (Joh 8:44) again spiritually-speaking.

As Mr. Armstrong used to say and as is fully supported by the Bible, there is a battle going on in our minds (Eph 6:12) and it starts right after conversion and lasts till the end of our lives.

The battle is being waged “..... against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.....”(Eph 6:12).

Please understand and realize that these spirit influences upon our minds are just that, influences. These principalities, powers, rulers of darkness and spiritual wickedness in high places have no power whatsoever to force or compel men to submit to them and to obey them. If they did, then man would not have the absolute power to choose if there are higher powers in the universe that can force their will upon them. If men sin because of having become the unwilling slaves of spirit beings who are rulers of darkness and spiritual wickedness then they cannot be held responsible for the sin that are committed under the irresistible influence of those higher powers. It would be those more powerful spirit powers working their will through them.

God commands mankind to choose and for this to be possible there can be no other higher power in the universe that can force men to believe something against their will. (Deu 30:19)

Deu 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

So where does sin come from in men's lives? James gives us the answer.

Jas 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

Jas 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Jas 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Sin is the result of decisions made by man to follow or not follow his own lust. Please note this is not saying that temptation comes from God or that it is Satan's or demons' lust in men that is the source of temptation but rather it is men's own lust. This is a topic which requires a long and detailed explanation and you can find it at the following hyperlink: [Your Mind in God's Plan of Salvation for Mankind](#) For sure, Satan and his demons do exert influence on our minds but they have no power to force us to do anything; we alone have the power to choose what we

will do. The main means by which we sin is our own lust. If you take the time to read through the study mentioned above you will understand how this occurs.

So, again, what is the chastening rising up to the level of being scourged that true believers (the sons of God) have to endure and over which many become bitter, refuse God's correction, and become spiritual bastards refusing to acknowledge the supreme authority of God in their lives as expressed by His law?

God's Scourging of His Sons

When we are first called to the truth, we are so excited we can hardly believe that all these wonderful things existed and that we had never known about them.

We have found the great treasure buried in the field, the pearl of great price and we want it and are ready to do anything in order to get it, to endure any hardship, pay any price, etc.

This is our first love of the truth which early in our conversion gives us great, boundless zeal for obeying God. We can't at that time possibly imagine there could be anything too hard for us to do or any price to pay that would be so high that we would not be ready to pay it.

However, at the time of our calling, we only have a very small amount of truth which God has shown us but as we grow in knowledge of the truth of God which is inevitable as we pray and study, we come to know and understand truth which goes squarely against some of our most cherished and treasured beliefs which we had manufactured for ourselves while cut-off from God and most of the time picked up from false religious teachers or paganism. Whatever they may be they are of the highest importance to us.

God's correction starts off easy and we agree to let go of certain things which though important to us we decide we can live without them. But as time goes on and we grow in knowledge, God's correction (His teaching of the truth to us as we pray, study and meditate) gets stronger till we come to the point where we have to abandon in order to accept the truth, some of our most precious beliefs which we thought were the truth but which we now know to be wrong. It can be so painful for us to abandon these beliefs that to do so is like enduring a physical scourging. But yet, if we are to grow in knowledge of the truth, we must abandon our previous and, "Oh so precious to us" false beliefs no matter how im-

portant they were to us as God leads us into ever more spiritual truth.

Many become bitter and refuse to be corrected; accept the truth God is showing them and; walk in it. They cannot bring themselves to abandon their false beliefs and start reasoning their way around God's law to make their beliefs which are contrary to God's law somehow compatible with God's law. They are not and cannot be made compatible with God's law and by refusing God's correction they adopt an attitude and embark on a process whose ultimate result is the loss of their salvation. Their cherished and supremely important beliefs contrary to God's truth are more important to them and they refuse to let go of their idols which they made for themselves. They no longer have God as their father because of their refusal to be corrected.

God corrects us by teaching us more and more of His truth and we have to exercise our self-will to freely and willingly cease to hold on to past false beliefs no matter how important to us they might have been, and to follow Christ. We are not corrected by trials though we have to endure trials because of the righteousness that we have as our knowledge of God's truth places us in conflict with the ways of this world. Some of them have to do with putting our old man and all his false beliefs to death, some of which were so very important to us. Freely and self-willingly accepting to abandon and have our old self die in its many facets, aspects and ways that are contrary to God's truth are the trials we have to endure unto the end as well as all the other physical, emotional and mental trials that are common to all mankind (sickness, grief, sorrow, ageing, death, etc.)

As Mr. Armstrong used to say, the hardest thing for man to do is admit that he was wrong. We all think of ourselves as being pretty smart and good looking too; we are filled with physical and intellectual vanity and had lived our lives accordingly up to the point of our calling. Then we find out as we grow in knowledge and understanding that much of what we had manufactured for ourselves as being the truth is wrong. Many have been unable to accept that they were wrong and refused the truth God was revealing to them to hold on to their past false beliefs.

All you have to do is read some of the comments left on different WEB sites by former members of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) while HWA led it and see how happy and relieved these people are to have finally found the truth i.e., a church that teaches what they believe; not the truth of God. They had refused God's chastening through His teaching them while they were in the WCG but had remained there nonetheless fearing losing their salvation. But though they may have

been members on the physical level, they had ceased to be members of God's church on the spiritual level and had lost their salvation from the time they refused to believe God because His teachings or correction went against their own, self-made truth which they placed above the truth of God.

Conclusion

God corrects newcomers to the truth and long-time members of His Church through giving them progressively more truth some of which inevitably will require that we abandon our own ideas no matter how important they might be to us in order to obey God. God says these personally-developed but false beliefs that are so important to us and that we have to abandon is such a hard and painful thing to do that it is like being scourged. Consequently, it should not be all that surprising that there are not many who have endured God's scourging; their personal but false beliefs were too important for them to abandon them.

Becoming part of God's Kingdom requires that in this life we trust God, submit ourselves to Him and abandon our idols.

Christ clearly and plainly says in verses that require no interpretation that is the few not the many that do let go of all their idols i.e., the truths they had manufactured for themselves while unconverted and which after their conversion they realize are not the truth.

Mat 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen. [they choose to remain in the world]

Mat 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in therat: [they compromise with the world to maintain some of their cherished personal beliefs that are contrary to God's law and in time drift back into the world; you cannot serve two masters.]

Not everybody but a few stubborn and incorrigible individuals will be saved as we may have once believed. It is a hard truth but one which should cause us all to cast a critical eye on our spiritual lives and make whatever changes are needed for us not to lose our salvation.

We will receive a very great reward but only if we will use our freedom to choose to freely and self-willingly put our old man and all his false beliefs to death and resolve to walk in newness of life.

