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Dear Associates and Friends,

July 2012

“[The Antinomy of the Bible](#)” is the article for this month by Dr. Ernest L. Martin from a 1975 audiotape. For those of you, like me, who were unaware of the word “antinomy” and its meaning,¹ the *Random House Dictionary 2012* definition is twofold:

“an-tin-o-my, noun, plural an-tin-o-mies.

- 1. opposition between one law, principle, rule, etc., and another.**
- 2. Philosophy: a contradiction between two statements, both apparently obtained by correct reasoning.”**

The second definition does not involve the biblical usage discussed in Dr. Martin’s article, which should not be a surprise. Philosophy contributes little to our understanding of the Bible. This is because the information from the Bible comes from divine revelation and not from human reason. The biblical revelation is not opposed to reason, of course, but the Bible does not derive its authority from reason. God’s thoughts are unbelievably sophisticated and deeper than ours. Isaiah tells us the extent of the difference between God’s thinking and ours:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says YHWH. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

• *Isaiah 55:8–9*

Yet remember that mankind has the ability to create, as Peter tells us in 1 Peter 2:13 (the word “ordinance” in Greek is actually “creation”). Peter is saying that we are creators. Indeed, King David wrote that we were created **“a little lower than Elohim.”** This means that we have near Elohim-like creative powers. However, unlike new age mystics, we understand that we definitely are not gods now:

“What is man, that you are mindful of him? and the son of man [adam], that you visit him? For you have made him a little lower than the angels [elohim in Hebrew], and have crowned him with glory and honor.”

• *Psalms 8:4–5*

While this passage is ultimately a statement of Christ’s post-resurrection glorification, it also applies to each of us as God’s declaration of our potential in Christ. We will be crowned **“with glory and honor.”**

One of God’s ways that are so marvelous is His ability to present two seemingly contradictory ideas at one time. Yet they are not contradictory if the distinct contexts are understood. We have difficulty doing this because we do not have the depth of understanding and judgment that God has. He shall give us those qualities in the future, but we certainly do not possess them at present.

As God’s creation, through Adam each of us is marvelously made in the image and likeness of God, yet we do not think or understand as God thinks and understands. Consider King David, the writer of Psalm 8:4–5. He was guilty of adultery and murder yet God considered him to be a man after God’s own heart

¹ If you knew that definition already — you deserve a gold star sticker.

(Acts 13:22), perfect in heart (1 Kings 15:3), and someone who “**was right in the eyes of YHWH**” except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite (1 Kings 15:5), and suffered for it (Psalm 32:5). What a contradiction! What is the answer to this enigma? The biblical answer is simple: “**man looks on the outward appearance, but YHWH looks on the heart**” (1 Samuel 16:7).

David sinned greatly yet his heart continued to be right toward God, who responds to a humble and repentant heart. God will live “... **with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones**” (Isaiah 57:15).

Theologian J.I. Packer noted this about antinomy:

“For the whole point of an antinomy — in theology, at any rate — is that it is not a real contradiction, though it looks like one. It is an apparent incompatibility between two apparent truths. An antinomy exists when a pair of principles stand side by side, seemingly irreconcilable, yet both undeniable. There are cogent reasons for believing each of them; each rests on clear and solid evidence, but it is a mystery to you how they can be squared with each other. You see that each must be true on its own, but you do not see how they can both be true together. ...

What should one do, then, with an antinomy? Accept it for what it is, and learn to live with it. Refuse to regard the apparent inconsistency as real; put down the semblance of contradiction to the deficiency of your own understanding; think of the two principles as, not rival alternatives, but, in some way that at present you do not grasp, complementary to each other.”

- **J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (Chicago: InterVarsity Press, 1961), page 18**

Dr. Packer’s point that biblical antinomies are reconcilable because the inconsistency is only apparent is well taken. Dr. Martin’s article focuses upon obvious biblical antinomies. He dwells on only one instance of an antinomy of theology, and that is in Philippians chapter 2. Theological reasonings of human theology have created many false antinomies such as predestination versus free will, God’s sovereignty versus human freedom (whatever that theological fantasy is), Christ being man and God, or how an imaginary trinity can consist as one and three at the same time. These are not antinomies from the Bible. They are derived from unbiblical human theology based on traditions of men.

Meetings

I will be attending the International Society for Biblical Literature meeting in Amsterdam, Netherlands between July 22–26, 2012. If you would like to meet with me in that area during that time I would be most pleased to meet with you. I will not have transportation available, so you will need to come to my location.

It is my expectation to be in York, England after the SBL conference. Contact me by email and hopefully we can arrange a meeting. Before I leave England, I will be in the London area. Again, contact me to arrange a meeting.

As I mentioned previously, I have been invited to speak at the Christian Universalist Association annual meeting at the Murray Grove Retreat and Conference Center in Lanoka Harbor, New Jersey. This 3-day conference goes from the evening of September 21st through early afternoon on September 23rd. (There is a charge for attending.) I speak on Saturday, September 22, 2012 when I will present on “Universal Salvation in the Roman Catholic Church.” I will focus on the belief of universal salvation in the modern Roman Catholic Church under the current Pope Benedict XVI, and the beginnings of teaching universal salvation from Catholic pulpits around the world.

My presentation will be an expansion from part of my article “[Modern Recognition of Universal Salvation](#).” Some of the information about the Catholic Church’s promotion of universal salvation has been reprinted in the June 2012 issue of [The Christian Universalist](#). The article on page 6 is titled “Pope Benedict Supports Doctrine of Universal Salvation.”

Also, my article “[Are You a Misfit?](#)” has been reprinted by Clyde Pilkington’s *Bible Student’s Notebook* internet publication. I am grateful that he appreciated this article enough to reprint it.

Thank You

One question we receive, and one I have mentioned before, is this supposed contradiction: the Gospel is free, so why does ASK charge for any of its materials? The Gospel from God is free, yet it is only free to us from God. Yet even our Father paid a price beyond what we can comprehend for our salvation: the life, death, and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. The description and extent of the cost of your salvation begin with the words, **“For God so loved the world ...”** (John 3:16–17).

Some religious institutions “give” free books and supplementary materials with the understanding that a percentage of those receiving the free material will eventually pay unbiblical “tithes” to the institution to subsidize its maintenance and growth. The problem with that concept is that the institution and its leaders are not qualified to receive tithes, and those giving tithes are not authorized to send them.²

ASK, however, charges for the printed books, reprint articles (that you can print free from the internet), some audio CD packages, and one DVD. The rest of our materials are free on the internet. We charge for those items because the printing (or producing) and mailing of Dr. Martin’s books and other research materials are a substantial expense for us. ASK is not an institution. Your obligation to us is this: we teach you, and we are worthy of your support. We continue to operate almost exclusively from your contributions.

Look at what is free on the ASK website. Hundreds of articles, newsletters, and commentaries, even entire books, most of which can benefit you when you read them or refer to them again in the future. They are all available to you 24 hours a day, every day of the year, as are hundreds of audio files that are downloadable, as well as a few videos of two lectures by Dr. Martin.

As you grow in grace and in knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, information you read previously will perhaps make a connection to give you a new understanding. In addition, as you read more and more of your own Bible, you will have a better comprehension of the plain meaning of the text and gain new insights about God and His plan for mankind.

This information will become embedded in your mind. As your faith grows, you begin to produce more and better good works, you will begin to recognize your bad works and change them. Reconciliation with friends, enemies, relatives, and acquaintances will become easier as God’s Holy Spirit works to nurture your soul to become more like Christ. As you read and study, you begin to live the truths of God from Christ through His written word. You increasingly develop the character that God seeks to produce within you.

This takes you from your present situation to the future:

“Beloved, now [at this moment!] are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that has this hope in him purifies himself, even as he is pure.”

• 1 John 3:2–3

So, the purpose of ASK is to help you in God’s process, for you to continue to **“grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”** (2 Peter 3:18). The free material is our service to you who come to ASK for teaching. Dr. Martin’s research is preserved for the present, and God willing for a long time to come, so you and others can benefit from clear and straightforward biblical teaching.

By helping us continue to meet expenses of keeping this archive available to others, and to you, we ask you buy books, and hopefully buy books for others. We also ask you to please contribute (or continue to contribute) to ASK. God has blessed us with Dr. Martin’s work. You have blessed us with your prayers on our behalf, with notes of encouragement, and with financial support. Thank you all, and God bless you.

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² Read Dr. Martin’s book [The Tithing Dilemma](#) (free online) that explains the true basis of tithing, what the biblical laws are, what was tithed (it was not income), who was qualified to pay, and who was qualified to receive tithes. The truth is surprising.