

THE FRIGHTENING IMPLICATIONS OF THE TEN BASIC BELIEFS OF UNIVERSAL RECONCILIATION

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Christians who believe in Jesus Christ and adhere to the teachings of the Bible have great cause of concern should the claims of universal reconciliation (UR) succeed. Here are 10 of the leading teachings of UR followed immediately by the serious and surprising implications.

Teaching #1: Love is the supreme attribute of God. His other attributes (holiness, justice, righteousness) are limited by his love. “God cannot act apart from love” (*The Shack*, 102). “Mercy triumphs over judgement because of love” (TS, 164).

Implications: (1) Out of logical necessity, God ceases to be God. For God to be God means that he is perfect in all his attributes. No one attribute is greater than another. If this is not the case, then some attributes would be imperfect, incomplete, and some standard outside of God would be the measure of God—and this is impossible. Thus by affirming that love is the supreme attribute of God UR has created a defective deity. God ceases to be God. (2) Humans have no standard by which to set the appropriate judgment and punishment for crimes. (3) Ultimately Jesus’ death on the cross is unnecessary. Jesus did not need to die for sins because God would have loved people enough to take them to heaven and his justice did not need to be fully satisfied. (4) Ultimately the incarnation of Jesus was unnecessary, because love as the supreme attribute would have brought all to God apart from the justice demanded by an eternal death for sin. (5) Sin is not so bad after all. (6) The Bible is untrustworthy, for it never limits any of God’s attributes or exalts one over another.

Note: This is probably the most central and far-reaching claim of UR; and it is the most heretical. (2) Many of these implications apply to other teachings below.

Teaching #2: God has already reconciled all people to himself by Jesus’ death on the cross. He has already removed the hostility between himself and people (TS, 192, 222).

Implication: (1) If reconciliation is already true for all, then there is no need to preach the gospel about Jesus Christ. (2) There is no need for people to believe in order to appropriate reconciliation. They already possess it.

Teaching #3: People either repent and believe the gospel before they die, or those who go to hell after dying will repent and believe the gospel, and then go to heaven. All go to heaven. Those people in hell change their destiny.

Implications: (1) There is no need to preach the gospel; no need to be engaged in missions or outreach. (2) The Bible is incomplete and untrustworthy here for it nowhere states that anyone can change his destiny after dying. (3) The entire record of church

history is filled with the misplaced emphasis on trying to reach the world with the good news. (4) Jesus is untrustworthy for he commanded his people to go to the whole world and preach the gospel (Matt 28:19-20). He taught that there are two destinies, one leading to life, the other leading to destruction (Matt 7:13-14).

Teaching #4: God does not punish sin. He seeks to cure it. Sin is its own punishment (TS, 120).

Implication: (1) There is no future judgment after death when all stand before God as Judge to receive punishment for their sins (2 Cor 10). (2) The Biblical account of judgments on individuals and nations (Adam and Eve, Cain, the generation of the Flood, the Tower of Babel, the people of Canaan, Israel and Judah because of idolatry, on Jesus at the cross) are not trustworthy.

Teaching #5: At the finality of all things the fallen angels and the Devil himself will all repent and go to heaven—and hell is no more.

Implications: (1) The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross was/is unnecessary. There is another way to get to heaven, since the death of Jesus on the cross did not concern the sin of angels. (2) Heaven is unsafe because Satan could rebel against God in the distant future. With his past experience he could believe that his future rebellion would be more successful. (3) A future rebellion of Satan could be repeated *ad infinitum*, but this is impossible. (4) Jesus work on the cross to provide forgiveness for all people was not final. (5) If there is no hell there is no heaven; there is no need for heaven.

Teaching #6: Since Jesus between his death and resurrection went to hell to proclaim salvation to those there, then he could go a thousand times more to deliver others who have gone there since.

Implications: (1) It is not a convincing interpretation of certain texts that Jesus ever did this (see Eph. 4:8-10; 1 Pet. 3:18-20; 4:6). (2) Even if this happened then, there are no words from Jesus or from the Apostles that say that he will do this again.

Teaching #7: Hell is not as we have believed it. Hell is not a place of God's everlasting punishment but of purging, correcting, reproof people so that given enough time all depart Hell (TS, 162-164).

Implications: (1) If there is no hell there is no heaven, for in the end heaven and hell are indistinguishable. (2) Jesus is untrustworthy because he warned of "everlasting torment" (Matt 25:41). (3) Then we humans have no standard by which to exert penalties and punishment for crimes done on earth.

Teaching #8: There is no place left in the universe where God's love has not conquered all. He is totally victorious. None are left in rebellion against God. All are brought into submission by love.

Implications: (1) Then the will of some to refuse to believe the gospel is voided. (2) Then God did not will to create humanity with a will to be able to choose not to believe.

Teaching #9: The institutions of marriage, the church, and the government are the “man-created, trinity of terrors that ravages the earth and deceives those I care about. . . . It’s all false” and part of “a diabolical scheme” (TS, 122-124; 179).

Implications: (1) Then the devil is in control. (2) Jesus is untrustworthy, since he said that he would build *his* church (Matt 16). The Bible says that Jesus is head of the church (Eph 2:19-22; 3:6-11; 4:14-16; 5:23), that he loves the church and died for it (Eph 5:25). (3) The Bible is untrustworthy since it describes God as forming marriage (Gen 2; Eph 5:25-33) and instituting government (Rom 13:1-6). (4) Then there are no duly constituted authorities delegated by God. (5) Thus all acts of anarchy and terrorism are justified. (6) All forms of marriage and non-marriage are equally legitimate; no form is better than any other (including LGBTQ forms). (7) Divorce for any reason is legitimate. (8) Adultery and prostitution are as legitimate as marriage. (9) The family structure has no value. (10) Church structures with elders, deacons, bishops, a constitution or faith statement are all Satanic and wrong. (11) Christian gatherings are demonic.

Teaching #10: People are in a “circle of relationship” with God that is pure, having no authority and no subordination to God (TS, 122-124).

Implications: (1) Then Jesus’ commandments to obey him and to love others (as in John 14-16) are to be disobeyed; and P Young is to be obeyed. (2) The church should not submit to Jesus (contra Eph 5:24). (3) Jesus’ claim to have “all authority in heaven and earth” is false (Matt 28:19). (4) Jesus is not to be acknowledged as Lord, King, Head of the church, Prince of peace, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, Savior, Master, etc. (4) Then believers should not “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (contra Eph 5:21). (5) All relationships will fail, since it is impossible to sustain “pure relationships” without structure and in a manner that benefits everyone.

In light of the preceding it is clear that UR can never succeed. It corresponds to no reality. It represents a man-centered theology. It has been tried many times before (the Garden of Eden for one place) and has always failed. But there is the constant need for vigilance to refute it, as Paul and the other Apostles instruct us (Eph. 2:1-2; 6:10-18), to be aware of false prophets and teachers as both Jesus (Matt. 7:13) and the Apostles warn (2 Cor. 11).