



Cultural challenge #1



The apparent injustice of God in the Gospel's conditions for salvation.

Christian universalism.

Isaiah 45:23 "I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me **every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.**"

John 12:32 "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw **all men** to Myself."

Phil.2:10-11 "**every** knee should bow, and . . . **every** tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord"

Rom.11:32 "God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them **all**"

Acts 10:34-35

"I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but **accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.**"

2 Corinthians 5

"18 Now all these things are from God, who **reconciled us** to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 namely, that God was in Christ **reconciling the world** to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation."

Who is Paul talking about?

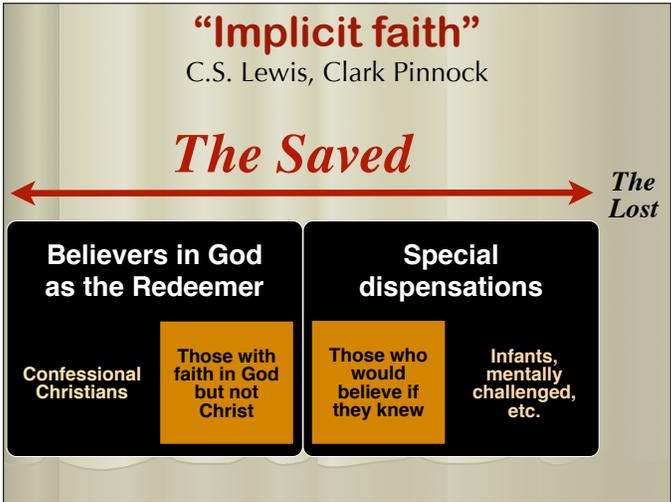
- 1. all people,** (Origen, Barth)
- 2. all who fear God,** (John Wesley, C.S. Lewis)
- 3. all who confess faith in Christ,** (Luther)
- 4. only the elect?** (Puritans)

"and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of **the whole world.**" 1 John 2:2

"God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation **who fear him and do what is right.**" Acts 10:34-35

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes in Him** shall not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:16

"no one can come to Me, **unless it has been granted him from the Father.**" John 6:65



“anonymous Christianity”

Karl Barth, Lesslie Newbigin

- “Father **forgive them for they know not what they do**” (those who have not heard).
- The issue is “**what best glorifies God** who seeks to reconcile all.”

The **conditional** gospel message is that all who have faith in Christ are reconciled (saved).



Universalism's gospel message is that all people have been reconciled (saved) even if they are not professing faith in Christ.



1. **Universal provision and application** – Christ saved every one, we just need to tell them.
2. **Limited provision and application** – Christ died only for the elect who are all saved and identified by faith.
3. **Universal provision with conditional application** – Christ provided reconciliation for the world but only those who believe receive.

2 Corinthians 5

“²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg {you} on behalf of Christ, **be reconciled** to God.”

Reconciliation is offered but must be accepted by faith.

Three related words in the “Vocabulary of Salvation.”

Romans 3

“²⁴ being **justified** (*declared righteous*) as a gift by His grace through the **redemption** (*purchased with a price*) which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a **propitiation** (*satisfying the holy wrath of God*) in His blood through faith.”

John 12:32 “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw **all men** to Myself.”

Phil.2:10-11 “**every** knee should bow, and . . . **every** tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord”

Rom.11:32 “God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them **all**”

“**all**” and “**every**”
may refer to “**all kinds (nations, races)**”
rather than “**every single person.**”

1 Tim.4:10 “is the Savior of **all men**, especially of those who believe”

“**Especially**” may have the sense of
“**specifically**”

2 Tim.4:13 “When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, **especially** the parchments.”

Acts 20:38 Jesus “grieving **especially** over the word which he had spoken,”

1 Corinthians 15:22

“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.”

In Adam

all died

“all” = all people in Adam

1 Corinthians 15:22

“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.”

In Adam

all died
In Christ

all made alive

“all” = all in Christ

Romans 10

“¹ Brethren, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God for them is **for their salvation**. ² For I bear them witness that **they have a zeal for God**, but not in accordance with knowledge. ³ For not knowing about God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.”

“⁹ that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and **believe** in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; ¹⁰ for with the heart man **believes**, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “Whoever **believes** in Him will not be disappointed.””

The Gospel

- is not universal salvation.
- is not limited provision.

- is universal provision
with
application by faith.