

WHO IS “OF GOD?”

Jno.8:47

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. To ask the question, “Who is ‘of God?’” implies that we think there are two classes of people: those who are “of God,” and those who are not “of God.”
2. What we have implied by our question is affirmed by the inspired text: Jno.8:47; 1Jno.3:10; 4:2-6; 5:18,19; 3Jno.11.
3. Jesus and his chosen apostles make it clear that not all who profess to be or claim to be “of God” are of “of God.” Cf. Mt.7:15,21-23; 15:7-9; Col.2:8,20-23.
4. Furthermore, we are told to “try (prove, test) the spirits” to determine whether or not they are of God, 1Jno.4:1.
5. Of course, the inspired text, the written word of God, is the standard by which we try, test and or prove whether or not people are who or what they profess to be spiritually, 1Cor.14:37; 2Tim.3:13-4:5; Jno.12:48-50.
6. In view of this: Who, then, is “of God?”

II. DISCUSSION

A. POSITIVELY

1. According to Jno.8:47, the one who “heareth God’s words” is “of God,” cf. 1Jno.4:6; 1:1-3.
 - a. That is, the one who, in this case, is “of God” is the one who is taught, believes and obeys God’s word.
 - b. Consider the context of Jno.8:47 (Vv.30-47).
 - c. Cf. Jno.6:41-45; Heb.8:10-12; Jno.7:17.
2. According to 1Jno.4:2, the one “that confesseth that Jesus is come in the flesh is of God.”
 - a. See 1Jno.2:22; 4:15.
 - b. What does it mean to confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh as John is considering the question?
 - c. See 1Jno.5:1a; 1Jno.2:29; 3:7.

3. According to 3Jno.11, the one “that doeth good is of God.” Cf. Jno.5:28,29; Eccl.12:13,14; 2Cor.5:10; 2Tim.3:16,17.
4. According to 1Jno.5:18,19, “whosoever is (stands) born of God,” does not practice sin, but “keepeth himself” so that the “wicked one toucheth him not” is “of God.” Cf. 1Jno.2:28,29.
5. Now consider Jno.1:11-13. Read, examine and explain it.
 - a. V.11.
 - (1) He came unto his own land or country.
 - (2) And his own (his own people, the Jews as a whole) received him not.
 - (3) They were his own people because they had long been God’s chosen people to whom the oracles had been committed and who had been for ages the recipients of manifold favors from God’s bountiful hand.
 - (4) They “received him not” by their refusal to believe and accept him as the Messiah, as their Lord and Savior; and they were eventually to consummate their rejection of him by causing him to be put to death.
 - (5) It was a deliberate and a contemptuous ***rejection*** (from *paralabon*).
 - b. V.12. “But as many as received him”
 - (1) “Received” is from ***elabon, or lambano*** – and here is in the active voice – meaning to “***take him.***”
 - (2) “to them gave he power (the right or privilege) to become the sons (children) of God, even to them that believe on his name.”
 - (3) “But as many as received (elabon or lambano) him,” or “***took him,***” were afforded the privilege of becoming children of God.
 - (a) At the point of faith they were given the right or the privilege to become (not that they already were) children of God.
 - (b) Compare a couple acquiring a marriage license. At that point they are not married; but they now have the right or the privilege to be married.
 - (c) Cf. Mk.16:15,16; ac.2:36-38; Ac.22:16; Jas.2:14-24.
 - c. V.13. “Who were born, not of...but of God.”
 - (1) The antecedent o “Who” must be “children of God” in V.12.

- (2) And refers to the new birth of Jno.3:3-6, or of obeying the gospel of Christ and becoming a new creature of Ac.2:36-38; 2Cor.7:17,18; 1Pet.1:22-25.
- (3) The affirmation of V.13 is explanatory of the phrase “children of God” in V.12, thus indicating that these do not trace their spiritual origin and spiritual relationship from men but from God.
- (4) In V.13 three possible sources are rejected for their origin.
 - (a) “Not of blood,” or “bloods,” a reference, perhaps, to the blood of both parents; that is, not of man.
 - (b) “Nor of the will of the flesh.” – an illusion to sexual desire; that is, not by natural generation.
 - (c) “Nor of the will of man,” literally, “of the male”
 - (d) From none of these causes is one born again or becomes a child of God in the spiritual sense.
- d. The generation is spiritual and is “of God.”
- e. Those who believed on his name, thus received or took Jesus by faith, were by this means given the power to become children of God which was accomplished by being born of God, or the new birth.
- f. These are “of God.”

B. NEGATIVELY

- 1. Not all those who express a desire to be “of God” are of God.
 - a. According to Mt.19:16-22; Mk.10:17-22; Lk.18:18-25, this rich young ruler:
 - (1) Expressed a desire to be of God and to inherit eternal life.
 - (2) In fact, he came running to Jesus and kneeled down to him and asked Jesus, “What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”
 - (3) He had and with some emotion expressed his desire to be “of God” but he wasn’t willing to pay the cost involved.
 - (4) “He went away sorrowful (grieved) for he had great possessions (was very rich)” of which he thought more than his soul!
 - b. Those of Mt.7:21-23 had a great desire to be “of God” and to enter heaven.
 - (1) What they had done and the claims they made for doing it proves their desire.

- (2) But in spite of their desire and their claims in proof of their desire, they were not “of God,” nor could they enter heaven because they were “lawless ones,” -- ”workers of iniquity” – they did not do the will of God.
 - c. Even King Agrippa of Ac.26:28 said, “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”
 - (1) To which Paul replied, “I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds, “ v.29.
- 2. According to Mt.15:1-14; Mt.23, not all those who claim to be “of God” are “of God.” Cf. Rom.2:17-24.
 - a. Though they claimed to be “of God,” Jesus said they were: “hypocrites,” “they honor me with their lips; but their heart is far from me,” “you transgress the commandments of God by your traditions,” “you make the commandments of God void by your traditions,” “worship in vain, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men,” they were “blind guides,” “serpents,” “fools,” “a generation of vipers,” “for a pretence make long prayers; therefore you shall receive the greater damnation,” they make themselves “the child of hell.”
- 3. According to Jno.12:42,43, not even all those who believed on Jesus were “of God;” for though they believed:
 - a. They did not and would not confess their faith in him. Cf. Mt.10:32,33.
 - b. This was because they feared the Pharisees and loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. Cf. Jno.9:22. See Mt.10:28.
 - c. Cf. Jas.2:19; 2:24.
- 4. Those who do not practice righteousness are not “of God,” 1Jno.3:7-10. Cf. 1Jno.2:24,25,28,29; Psa.119:172; Jas.2:14-24. See Mt.7:21-27; Lk.6:46; Heb.5:8,9; Ac.10:34,35; 2Jno.9,10.
- 5. Those who “deny that Jesus is the Christ,” or “that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is (are) of God,” 1Jno.2:22,23; 4:3; 2Jno.7.
- 6. Those who do not love the brethren are not “of God,” 1Jno.3:10,11; 4:7,8,20,21; 1Jno.5:1-3; 2:11; 3:15. Cf. Rom.12:10; Phil.2:2-4.

III. CONCLUSION

1. From this we learn that to be “of God” means”
 - a. One is righteous – practices righteousness, does God’s will.
 - b. One is influenced by God’s word – he listens to it; hears it; believes it; obeys it.
 - c. One loves the brethren of Christ.
 - d. One believes Jesus Christ is the Son of God; obeys him.
 - e. One believes and teaches for doctrine the word of God, the doctrine of Christ; renounces the doctrine and commandments of men.

2. Therefore, those of the Denominational religions; the Catholic religion; the religion of Islam; Buddha, etc. are not “of God” because they teach for doctrine the commandments of men; they do not follow the doctrine of Chris; some of them do not even believe he is he Son of God and he Savior of sinners.