

# Unpopular Bible Doctrines #13: Lazy People Condemned by God

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*Unpopular Bible Doctrines*

By Larry Wessels

**Bible Text:** Proverbs 15:19; Matthew 22:23-32

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Larry Wessels: Greetings and welcome to Christian Answers. I'm Larry Wessels, Director of Christian Answers and thank you for being with us today. Today we're doing a very special series of programs on Bible doctrines that are deemed to be unpopular. Now, joining me in this Unpopular Bible Doctrine series is my very special guest and Director of Pilgrim Publications, Bob L. Ross. Bob, great to have you here, brother.

Bob L. Ross: Thank you, Larry.

Larry: Bob L. Ross is one of the world's leading publishers of the works of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the famous Prince of Preachers from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Now Bob for our audience, could you tell us a little bit about Charles Haddon Spurgeon and some of the works you have there with you?

Bob: Well Larry, probably most of the people listening to this program may be acquainted with Spurgeon because they would have an interest in Christian things and Spurgeon has been around a long time. But our interest in Spurgeon, of course, is in his sermons and works that were published in the 1800s, reprinting those and making them available. They are on the internet now more and more. They are being added to the internet, even many of his books and, of course, they are on cd rom and in many ways they are getting used in the world. One of the ways is this book here that we just recently did not too long ago anyway. It's Spanish sermons, Spurgeon in Spanish and there is a website now, a gentleman in Mexico City, a good friend of ours, is translating and putting Spurgeon sermons on the internet in Spanish and this is one of the first books that has been done, 36 sermons by Spurgeon on the Gospel, and this is the Spanish language edition of it. So we're trying to get Spurgeon known not only to the English speaking world of our generation but to other languages and in the United States where we have a great population of Spanish speaking people, we think this book will make a great contribution to helping to spread the Gospel.

Then we have another book and this is an unusual book. A gentleman read through the entire 3,563 sermons, I think, of Spurgeon's sermons. It took him about seven years to do it and he collected these quotations, over 5,000 illustrations and quotations from

Spurgeon on a variety of subjects. A lot of times people say, "I wonder what Spurgeon thought of that? I wonder what his idea was about this particular thing?" Well, you can go in here and he's got it indexed; he's got all the quotations referenced. Sometimes you pick up a book of quotations from Spurgeon and they're not referenced; you don't know where it came from. It could've come from John Doe and you'd never know but this man has it all referenced where you can find it in the context of the sermons themselves and traces down if you want to read it in context to see if that indeed was what it sounded like when you read the excerpt. So it's called "Exploring the Mind and Heart of the Prince of Preachers: C. H. Spurgeon," put together by Kerry J. Allen, a Baptist pastor from up in Illinois and this is one of our latest publications here that we are helping. We didn't actually publish this one but we're helping to distribute this book. So that's a little bit of information about Spurgeon.

Larry: Alright Bob and for our audience, anyone that is interested in more on this subject and particularly the works and sermons of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, just call or write our ministry. You'll see those phone numbers and our address will be popping up at the end of the program so feel free to call or write. Also, if you'd like to get on our free newsletter mailing list, you can call or write to our ministry, Christian Answers, and you will receive a free subscription to the Christian Answers Newsletter whenever it comes out. So that is there and yours for the asking, basically.

With that, let's move on to the next Unpopular Doctrine #57: Lazy and slothful people are condemned by God. Of course, lazy and slothful here is also referred to in the King James version, people like this as sluggards and you get a lot of references to this, particularly from King Solomon in Proverbs. Proverbs 15:19; Proverbs 18:9; Proverbs 19:24; Proverbs 21:25; 22:13; 24:30; Proverbs 13:4; 20:4; 26:16. You also look in your New Testament references concerning lazy and slothful people. You have Matthew 25:26, the wicked and lazy servant mentioned in the parable of the talents. Romans 12:11, you are told not to be slothful or lazy in business. Hebrews 6:12 says, "Don't be lazy." 2 Thessalonians 3:10, if you don't work, you shouldn't eat. Colossians 3:22-25, is a very key passage at least for me and in the way I conduct my life and what I do at my job. You're to work for your employer as if you were working for God.

Proverbs 15:19. The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.

Proverbs 18:9. He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

Proverbs 19:24. A slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

Hebrews 6:12. That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

2 Thessalonians 3:10. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

Larry: So you're to do a good job in whatever labor you find yourself involved in as if you were working for the Lord. So you are to be a good servant. You're to serve your master as if you were serving the Lord. Unfortunately, a lot of people think that they're doing a good job of work by doing less work. In other words, the less work they can get away with for their eight hours of pay, the better they're doing. They're taking it the lazy man's way and they're not looking at it the Bible way and unfortunately being lazy, slothful, being a sluggard, all of these things particularly in the Proverbs verses you just saw a while ago, point this out in dynamic detail.

Okay Bob, what do you have to say about the lazy sluggards that are out there?

Bob: I will say that all the Scriptures you are giving there from Proverbs indicates just what Proverbs is. It is a good manual on a lot of things that pertain to life, particularly the matter of work and the diligence that you should put into work and various responsibilities that are there. And you're talking about slothful people and lazy people, I was thinking of that verse in Proverbs 24:33, "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man."

I had a picture that was snapped to me unbeknown to me when I was in my office one day and I was taking a nap and there I was asleep.

Larry: With your hands folded.

Bob: And someone took my picture so when I saw it, I wrote that Scripture on there and tacked it on the wall so I could remember: don't give yourself too much sleep. I don't want you to wind up here in poverty or want.

Larry: You haven't done like it says in Proverbs about claiming there is a lion in the street and you'd better not go out and do anything.

Bob: No, but I'll tell you a story. We had a lion attack a man one time that worked with us and I was in the printing business with my son-in-law and he was always late and sometimes wouldn't come in and so he said, "Well, I'll tell you." He lived out in the country. He said, "I got in my car and there was a bear in the road and I couldn't get around him." So he pulled that right out of the Scriptures.

Larry: This is very similar.

Bob: There was a bear in the road. But it is not conducive to Christian character, it's not conducive to Christian responsibility, it's not conducive to success in life even to engage in this kind of slothful, lazy, irresponsible behavior. After all, God has given you and me certain gifts in this body. We have mobility. There are people probably listening to us today that can't move hardly and their legs won't carry them around. Their arms maybe won't move. They don't have mobility and we have mobility and we take it for granted.

Just coming and going. Walking or whatever, we take it for granted and until you get out there pushing around on a walker or riding your...what are those little motorcycles called?

Larry: Mopeds.

Bob: Whatever. Until you get to that stage of life, you kind of forget this is such a blessing just to be able to walk and to move. And eyesight and ears to hear and taste buds and all these little things that we just use every day, the bodily functions, and we just take them for granted. We don't use them responsibly. God has given us all these wonderful gifts. Are we going to be held accountable for how we use them? I think we are. I think we're going to be held accountable for what actions and deeds we have done with the gifts that God has given us physically and Christians of all people, what does it say in Romans 12:1? "Present your bodies a living sacrifice which is your reasonable service," and it's reasonable because the Lord has bought us with such a great sacrifice.

Larry: You know, when I'm thinking of how Adam was created by God, he didn't require Adam just to lay around and sleep all day. When Adam was created by God, didn't Adam have to do and work like name all the animals? He had to do certain things.

Bob: He had to tend the earth, you know.

Larry: Exactly. He had to do some work. He was created to do some work.

Bob: He had to be starting the world.

Larry: That's right so he wasn't created just to lay around and goof off and think there's a lion in the street.

Bob: And the thing about it, God has so made work that it is regenerating. In other words, you get regenerated when you work. You feel like sleeping and you get a good night's sleep. I've often said this: the most important things in life are your health and good night's sleep. If you've got those two things, everything else will take care of itself. Everything else will take care of itself. If you're healthy and you get a good night's sleep, everything else will fall into place.

Larry: And follow God's principles.

Bob: So God has created things like work, hard work. It regenerates and not only does it regenerate, it strengthens those bodily muscles and functions that you use in your work. You know, you get out there in early spring, Larry, I remember I used to have a garden and get out there in early spring and I'd be hoeing around and get those little old blisters on my hands cutting the weeds out and everything and hoeing the ground and getting it ready to plant things in it. But, you know, the more you work at it, the tougher that skin gets. By the end of summer, you don't even have a blister or anything on there to bother you.

Larry: That's right. God has made it that way.

Bob: God has made it so that it works in your favor.

Larry: That's right. Okay, with that said, let's move on to our next Unpopular Doctrine. I know the lazy people of the world didn't like that last one but anyway, let's see how people like this one and I know this can't go over well with a lot of people out there because this may be their god and they may be hoping that it's going to be like this in heaven. But Unpopular Doctrine #58: There is no sex or marriage in heaven. Of course, if you know anything about Mormon theology, that really wrecks their whole theological system of how they're going to become gods because it's all dependent on marriage in a Mormon Temple, become a god of your own planet. Anyway, as you can see there on the chart, Matthew 22:23-32, Jesus gives the only direct reference to this question.

Luke 20:34-38. And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.

Larry: He answers the question point blank in this passage and as our viewers have seen there, Bob, Jesus says it very plainly. He says, "Look, there is no marriage or giving in marriage in heaven." People are going to be as the angels and as we know in God's creation, the angels are always presented as basically just there already. There is no need to have a male or female in the sense of angels for procreation purposes. We know sex is created for procreation but the angels don't seem to have, from what we know in the biblical references and Old Testament, New Testament, there is just no mention of any kind of angelic sex. There is no mention of any need for this procreational sex in heaven or before the world was created or any of this kind of stuff. We basically have Jesus right here telling us point blank what's going on. Any comments?

Bob: Well, you can readily see why this is an unpopular doctrine with a lot of people because there is so much emphasis and so much interest in this matter of sexual relationship, not only between husband and wife where it is sanctified by God, but others as well. But in life, it comes down to where we embrace this principle even in life. A man and a woman come down to their latter years and their bodily functions and desires and passions naturally taper off and so they have less interest in this particular fulfillment. When you're 20, 30, 40, in the peak years, you can almost think, "Well, I hope this goes on forever. In heaven, I hope we have this in heaven," because it is a wonderful thing to be in love and have a relationship, an intimate relationship with your husband and with your wife. But it's like all the other pleasures of the body, the functions of the body and due course in time, they taper off and all the Cialis or Viagra or whatever the word is, is not going to reconstruct and help you keep going on forever and ever in this particular

mode of living. Yet there are people that fall for certain religious teachings that, "Hey, you're going to have all these things in eternity that's going to be so wonderful sexually."

Larry: I'm thinking of Islam and Mohammed who said that you get 70 virgins if you get killed in jihad.

Bob: He's not the only one. You have some of the Mormon brethren out here in Utah and then just whoever else has this concept that we're going to have some kind of a heavenly sexual harem, as it were. I think that probably derived from an age bracket of maybe 20-35, somewhere in that area, that this kind of thing would be in heaven because they were so wonderful in their fulfillment...

Larry: Also, I think a large part of it is due to the simple desires of natural man, the lust factor as well. You think of someone at work, I don't know, there's this woman at work that for at least ten years she's been mentioning on and off, I think she likes me but she's always telling me from here and there, not all the time, but over the years she has said, "Well, in the next life, you and me are going to be married. In the next life." I try to clarify that fact but I think a large part of this doctrine being so unpopular is because sex is so popular. Sex is so popular that people just want it, like you said, to go on into the next life but I'm afraid to destroy your parade. There is no sex in heaven. After this life, once this life is over, there is no more sex. There is no more marriage. Jesus himself said it and if Jesus is a false prophet and he's a liar, then maybe you've got an outside shot that there will be some but according to what Jesus said in Matthew 22, there is no sex in heaven so forget it. Get your mind on God and righteous living and get your mind off the sex.

Bob: That helps keep it in perspective.

Larry: That's it. Alright, with that, let's move on to the next Unpopular Doctrine and that will be Unpopular Doctrine #59: The Jews killed Christ. This is in reference to being literally and physically killing Christ by turning him over to the Romans but God's eternal salvation plan to save his elect ordained Christ's death. You get references to that in Isaiah 53, Acts 22:23, also the book of Hebrews. So basically here as you see from these references in front of you on the screen, Mark 14:61-65, Jesus is arrested and a kangaroo court trial before the Sanhedrin and the high priest there where they condemned him to death for blasphemy. Mark 15:11-15, you also have his trial before Pilate. Matthew 26:57-68, likewise parallel passages to the Gospel of Mark but down here in Matthew, the Sanhedrin trial. Also, Matthew 27:20. Matthew 27:25, where the Jews themselves said, "Let his blood be on us and our children." Luke 22:66-71. Luke 23:13-25. Also, John 18:19-24. And particularly this one, John 19:10-15 and particularly verse 11 where Jesus said to Pilate, he said, "The one who has turned me over to you is guilty of the greater sin," that would be the Jews, Judas and, of course....

Bob: ...is conspirators...

Larry: ...exactly, which would include the Jews themselves: the high priest leading the crowds to yell, "Crucify! Crucify!"

Mark 14:61-65. But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

Matthew 27:25. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

John 19:10-15. Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin. And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

Larry: So basically what you have here are verses throughout the Gospel records showing clearly that the Jews are the ones who had Jesus literally and physically killed although we know from a biblical standpoint that it was God in his eternal plan of salvation for mankind to have his only begotten Son turned over to die a death like this and shed his blood so that sinners who would repent and believe on him could be saved from the wrath of God to come.

But it's unpopular and I think, Bob, of that movie that Mel Gibson came out with a few years ago and it was such a big hit over the whole world, "The Passion of the Christ," I think it was called. He took a lot of heat from Jews and people that support the Jews because his movie was coming off particularly this Gospel of Matthew and he used that passage about, "Let his blood be on us and on our children," and stuff and he was taking all kinds of heat because they were saying, "You're making the Jews look bad. How dare you do that! You can't do that!" Now, we know it was the Romans that actually crucified him but it was the Jews, the churchgoers. I like to refer to them as the churchgoers that turned him over to be crucified.

So, Bob, what is your take on this? It's an unpopular thing to say the Jews killed Christ and that's, as we know, the eternal aspect of God's plan but in the physical sense, how can

you say it was the Romans when really the Romans were sort of there when he was turned over?

Bob: Well, in a very real sense, it does not matter who is the responsible party about the death of Christ because as you pointed out, in the book of Acts in chapter 2, it said that Pontius Pilate, who was a Roman, Herod and I believe he mentions the Jews. Is this 2:23?

Larry: Acts 2:23.

Bob: Let's see, let me read it for you.

Larry: It's Peter's sermon.

Bob: He was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," and then in chapter 4, I believe this is the one I'm looking for, verse 27, he says, "Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." So you've got them all. You have representatives, you might say, of the whole world and in a very real sense in the purpose of God, our blood, all of our blood, is on our hands, that Jesus' blood is on all our hands because he died for our sins.

Larry: That's correct.

Bob: Jesus didn't die because the Romans or the Jews or Herod and Pilate murdered him or killed him or whatever you want to call it, Jesus said, "You don't take my life from me, I lay it down of myself. I'm sacrificing myself," right? So it doesn't really matter who we could pin the crime on, if you call it a crime or the deed on, because God had ordained that Jesus was going to die and somebody had to put him to death because the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God had predestinated this to be the way of salvation. And I thank God for it so far as thanking God that he made a way of salvation. I can't thank anybody that were that mean to do that and that wicked but if they hadn't done it, Larry, where would my soul be?

Larry: That's right.

Bob: So we don't have to look at it to try to pin the crime on somebody. I don't blame the Jews. I don't blame the Romans. I don't blame Herod. I don't blame Pilate. I don't blame Judas. This was just God's way of bringing everything together to offer the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. That's the way I like to look at it. It's like Joseph looked at it in Egypt, "You thought it for evil, God meant it for good." That's the way you have to look at this. These people that they mention here that were actually there on the scene, Herod and Pilate and the people, the Gentiles, the people of Israel, they were all gathered together and they were there to do what God was designing for good that we could be saved through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Larry: That's what I like that you pointed out so clearly, the reason I put this unpopular doctrine in this context, the Jews killed Christ, but it wasn't only them as you just mentioned. It wasn't only them but I find it so interesting that when that movie came out there was such a furor about, "Don't blame the Jews! Don't blame them!" You see, we're all responsible, everybody is responsible.

Bob: You see, that's where those kind of approaches are disregarding what the Scripture teaches about this. The Scripture is not teaching to blame the Jews for the crucifixion or to blame the Romans or to blame somebody else, it's just showing that we all had a hand in it.

Larry: That's right.

Bob: The state, the Roman government. Religion, the leading religion of that time in Jerusalem. The religious leaders and the government official here and on and on and then every one of us whose blood or whose sins the blood of Jesus was shed to pay for. So we all put our hands on the sacrifice and he died for our sins.

Larry: Amen. With that said, let's move on to Unpopular Doctrine #60. It says: Jesus had a low view of hypocritical religionists and often described their fate at the hands of God in the end. Okay, we have Luke 19:12-27, that's where Jesus gives the parable of God's citizens who hate God and that God will slay them. Matthew 21:33-46, you have Jesus' parable of the landowner. Matthew 23, the whole chapter, churchgoing hypocrites talking about the scribes and the Pharisees; Jesus just blasted the scribes and the Pharisees the whole chapter. Mark 12:1-12, the parable of the vine growers; he will destroy those vine growers. Also, John 8:44-47, Jesus called these religious guys that, "You are of your father the devil." Jesus is talking in Revelation 2:2-7 and he talks about how he commends his people for testing false religionists.

Luke 19:12-27. He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take

from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

Matthew 23:27. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

Larry: So and, of course, in every one of these cases, Bob, we find particularly in these parables, Luke 19 for instance is very unpopular with people because Jesus as the king there in that parable says, "Bring them before me and slay them before me. Kill them all before me." And then the unjust vine growers, they kill the son of the man while he's away and he sends his son to collect and what do you think that king is going to do to those wretches? He will bring those wretches to a wretched end. And as you get into all those parables and things, you find that God is going to take these wicked, evil people who are on his property and he's going to deal with them according to what their deeds deserve. Any comments?

Bob: Well, in the analogies of those that you might say that Jesus spoke harshly of and condemned, I would say that number one on the list unfortunately is religious people, moreso than the harlots, moreso than the cheaters or the stealers or the thieves and moreso than the sex perverts or whatever. The ones that Jesus dealt with more harshly than anybody seemed like was the religious leaders and you say, "Well, why would he do this to men who are trying to promote religious things and why would he be so hard on them?" Because, Larry, they were standing in the way. Jesus said, "You are blocking the kingdom of heaven and you are changing God's laws, you are changing God's word and installing your traditions and so you won't enter in and neither will you let those enter in that would enter in." So the religious leaders come down for the most scathing denunciation by the Lord in Matthew 23 which you mentioned. "Woe unto you," he said over and over again. So this is an unpopular doctrine because the religious leaders don't like it when they get scolded, when they get rebuked. They don't like it one bit and yet that's what Jesus did when he was here: he scolded them very severely for their false teachings and their becoming a stumblingblock and a hindrance.

Larry: Well, you know what it sounds like, Bob, that just because you go to church or just because you're preaching or just because you go to a Bible study or have sincere religious beliefs about a god, that that may not help you in the end. That just believing or having some kind of religious affiliation may not be good enough to get you to heaven.

Bob: Yeah, it's going to be a testimony against them actually because it's the evidence that they didn't trust Jesus. Did you ever think of it that way?

Larry: That's right.

Bob: All these good works that they came up and said, "Lord, didn't we do this? Didn't we do that?" and so on, that's just evidence that you didn't trust Jesus for salvation.

Larry: That's right, because you're putting your faith in these other things rather than Christ himself.

Bob: It's like when Cain brought in the offering of the crops he raised, that was evidence that he didn't believe in the Lamb. He didn't look forward to the coming of the Lamb of God.

Larry: That's right, so their own religion will be part of their condemnation in the end.

Bob: It will weight against them.

Larry: That's right. With that, let's move onto the next Unpopular Doctrine, this is #61: God creates some people as "vessels of wrath" made to be destroyed. Now, we have in Romans 9:11-23, we have there examples of these vessels of wrath such as Esau who God hated and, of course, Pharaoh who God wanted to show his power in. We look in Jude 4 and we find that these false prophets are marked out by God for this condemnation. Revelation 13:8, we find that there are people that are not written in the book of life. In 1 Peter 2:7-8 we have people that are appointed to this doom. 2 Peter 9:12-15, that God knows how to keep the unrighteous under punishment to be eventually destroyed. Amos 3:2, here you have all these people that these are the only ones chosen, this mass of people. Proverbs 16:4, it says there the wicked are made for the day of evil. 1 Samuel 2:25, the Lord desired to put them to death. Joshua 11:20, it says there, the Lord wanted to destroy them. Then you also have Psalm 18:40-42, the Lord destroyed them even when they cried out to him for mercy.

Romans 9:21-23. Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.

Jude 4. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation 13:8. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

1 Peter 2:7-8. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

Proverbs 16:4. The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

1 Samuel 2:25. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.

Larry: And, of course, there are many more but for our chart and time's sake, we'll leave it there but this has got to be, Bob, one of the most chilling, to think that God who is like a potter who takes some clay and he can make that clay into something good or he can make that clay into something dishonorable and then he can do with that clay as a potter does any way he wants so you never hear the pottery yelling, "Why did you make me like this?" But it sounds like he can make people any way he wants to make them and if he wants to make them for vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, he'll make them that way. What do you have to say?

Bob: I say that's an unpopular doctrine to me, Larry. I don't like to think about that. I'll tell you, this doesn't satisfy my human nature and my reasoning to think that that would be something that God would do and so I say, "Well, why does he find fault? Who resists his will?" You know, that's exactly what they asked Paul. Well, actually they didn't ask him, Paul anticipated they would.

Larry: Yeah, because it only brings it out.

Bob: He said, "Well, though will say then unto me, why doth he yet find fault for who hath resisted his will?" Now, I'm not about to tell these folks that I understand and I can explain to you why God deals with people this way. All I can tell you is that it's affirmed right here in the ninth chapter of Romans and Paul is the fellow who sets it forth and he anticipates what me and you and the rest of the world would say to this and that, "Well, if that's so, why in the world does he find fault? How can he find fault? Who can resist his will?" And you know the answer that Paul gave, he didn't try to rationalize it. He didn't try to explain the philosophy of it. He didn't try to offer some apologetic type statement for it. All Paul says, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory," and so on.

That's Paul's answer. That's my answer. I'm not going to try to explain it, I'm just going to say, "I can't reply. Sure, it's against my grain just as well as it may be yours, just as well as it was this fellow in chapter 19. Why does he yet find fault?" you and I might say. But he confronts it this way, Larry: are we going to accept it or reject it? Are we going to twist it and distort it or are we going to accept it and go with it and just let the chips fall where they may?

Now, let me say this one last thing about it: if you don't want to be in this class, if you don't want to be classified here, the Bible says, "Whosoever will may come," so you can get out of that category by, "Whosoever will may come." You can come on in the door. The door is still open if you want to stay over here and maybe be one of these vessels of that wrath fitted to destruction. It's up to you. Right?

Larry: Yeah, it's probably one of the most terrifying of all the unpopular doctrines, especially even my co-host here has trouble with it. It definitely can be something that should make everybody watching out there really ponder this deeply because if God has that kind of power over your life where he can make somebody into a vessel of wrath, that ought to wake you up, slap you upside the head with a 2x4, get you to where you go, "Man, this God is not this cream puff God I thought he was. He's not just...I mean, we're talking serious business here. May I'd better take him more seriously than I've been. I just thought he was going to let everything go just the way he feels like it." Maybe you should start reading the Bible and start finding out what God is really like.

The unfortunate thing, Bob, you know this, most people don't read the Bible and really know what God is like. What is this God of the Bible really like. What are his attributes. Understand who this God is and find out if the God that you believe in may not be the God of this Bible. The God of the Bible may be someone totally alien and foreign to you and you'd better get to know who he is so you don't make a tremendous mistake that will cost you all eternity.

Okay, with that said, let's move on to our next Unpopular Doctrine. That last one is hard to beat, Bob, but we'll see what we can come up with.

Bob: I'll tell you, it's a jawbreaker.

Larry: Unpopular Doctrine #62: the fact that Jesus cursed a defenseless fig tree is condemned by many. Now, I wasn't originally going to put this in here but I just found it interesting that so many liberals and what you would call soft-hearted people thought it was cruel and unusual for Jesus to go around picking on a defenseless fig tree I just couldn't resist putting it in this series here.

So here are our verses: Mark 11:12-14 and also verses 20 and 21, Jesus curses a defenseless fig tree and he said, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." Of course, it goes on to show that the fig tree withers and, of course, we get the same thing in Matthew 21:18-22, the fig tree withers immediately. Also, in Luke 13:6-9 you've got the parable of a fig tree which is basically a call to repentance in this particular parable about the fig tree, "Why does it even use up the ground?" In fact, it reminds me of the most famous sermon ever preached on the North American continent by Jonathan Edwards in his famous sermon "Sinners in the hands of an angry God," and he used that very phrase, "Why does it even use up the ground?" in showing that here is a call to repentance, using the fig tree as an example.

Mark 11:12-14 and 20-21. And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it...And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away.

Matthew 21:18-22. Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away. And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away! Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

Larry: So anyway, Bob, we're looking at this actual, the first few references from Mark and Matthew which show Jesus actually cursing this fig tree and it just shrivels up. It just dies on the spot from Jesus' curse. Then, of course, we get the parable later in Luke about an unprofitable tree, something that doesn't bear any fruit. It's not doing what its meant to do. So can we conclude here that Jesus is a cruel gardener that just doesn't know how to treat plant life? How do you respond to this and the liberals that say that that's just too cruel and mean of the meek and mild Jesus to do such a thing?

Bob: Well, Spurgeon I believe it was said you don't want to try to make a parable or illustration stand on four legs and I think in this particular instance where Jesus is using an illustration of the fig tree and what was wrong with it. Well, as you said, it just wasn't bearing the fruit. Am I right on that? Is that what we saw here that it wasn't bearing the fruit? Verse 20 said that they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots and that was a result of his speaking to it, cursing it and so forth and all I can say about this is, I know some people say, "Oh well, this is a type or a symbol of something or other," and I won't go into a lot of repetition on that. All I can say is that it illustrates a point that God sometimes will destroy things that are not being productive according to what they should be in his kingdom and I don't say that every one that dies young or everything that goes bankrupt or everything like a tragedy that might happen to destroy something is necessarily the hand of God. I don't know but it's in the scope of possibility when you look at a situation like this. That's about all I can think about on this one, Larry, that it just wasn't doing what it was supposed to be doing and God didn't have any use for it.

Larry: And in fact, by extrapolation, you can then say, well, I can relate to people who should be doing what God wants them to do but if they don't do what God wants them to do, we'll say they pick up unrepentant and wicked ways, then God will curse them just like he cursed this fig tree here. It wasn't getting the job done. Anyway, I only brought that up just because that fig tree example gets so many of these liberal, soft-hearted

people that don't like to take the Bible seriously upset. I had to put it in because it was unpopular.

Bob: Well, Larry, things like this may have been put in the Bible so that unbelievers could have something to really choke on. You know, if they're really going to choke, give them something that maybe they can really think about with some degree of rationality.

Larry: This one really makes them choke and it's like a thorn in their psyche. They don't like this.

Bob: If they're going to reject God, here's something that they can convince themselves of without much trouble.

Larry: Okay, Bob, we're just about out of time for this program. I want to let our viewers know that they can call or write us for free information on this subject or other subjects that we have available through Christian Answers. The phone number and the mailing address are at the end of the program. You'll also see our websites and email address so you're more than welcome to contact us that way.

Bob, I'd like you to take just another quick moment here and mention Pilgrim Publications and the works of Spurgeon that are available through your ministry that people can contact through us if they're interested. Go ahead.

Bob: Well, Larry, the primary thing I've been involved in in my life for several years now has been the publication, distribution of the works of Spurgeon. I do other things but this is primarily what I'm engaged in and if people are interested in the publications we have of Spurgeon, we'll be glad to furnish them a price list of all the various titles that we have available which would include his sermons and several books and many other publications that we have by or about Spurgeon.

Furthermore, we have a video on the life of Spurgeon done by Dr. Kenneth Connolly and he did a very good job in giving us a one hour biography of Spurgeon. He went to England and he filmed all over the place over there where Spurgeon was born and was converted and baptized and pastored and all that. That's available.

And we have Spurgeon on cd rom, his sermons and other works are on cd-rom and also not too long ago we did a story of my trip to England, my pilgrimage to Spurgeon country where we filmed all of these localities that are identified with Spurgeon's life and ministry and what went on in those places, just a brief summary about the life of Spurgeon.

Larry: Very good, brother. Well, that's it for our program today. Thank you again for joining us in this series of Unpopular Bible Doctrines. We'll be back again for our next program so join us for that. In the meantime, I'm Larry Wessels with Christian Answers. Bob L. Ross. Bob, thanks for being with us from Pilgrim Publications. We'll see you next time and remember Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man

comes to the Father except by me," Jesus said. So through Jesus Christ is the way of salvation unto the eternal God. Thank you so much. God bless you all.

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