

## DOES GOD GIVE EVERYONE AN OPPORTUNITY TO KNOW THE TRUTH?

The Bible declares that ". . .God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). Certainly He would not allow anyone to perish without an adequate opportunity to know the truth. The manner in which God confronts all mankind with His truth is clearly specified in His Word, the Bible. According to Romans 1:19,20 two presentations of truth have been graciously given to everyone. The first is a basic knowledge of God found in one's conscience. Verse 19 states, ". . .That which may be known of God is manifested in them; for God hath shewed it unto them."

There is a second way God has universally revealed Himself. "Nature," including such things as the intricacies of the human body or the vastness of space, instructs every person in perhaps the most fundamental of all truths, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead. . ." (verse 20).

Based on these two principles, God's general revelation in conscience and nature, the Apostle Paul draws the definitive conclusion, ". . .they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20). God does adequately reveal Himself to everyone during this mortal life. No one can ever stand before God and claim he had no opportunity to know the truth.

Sadly, the Bible also informs its readers that all mankind has utterly rejected God's clear revelations in conscience and nature, incurring Divine wrath (Romans 1:18). The Lord is certainly under no obligation to present additional revelation to those who have already refused what they have been given. In fact, rebellion against more truth would result in even greater judgment (Luke 12:47,48).

But in God's great love, He has determined to bring the Biblical details of eternal life to each one whose heart is prepared to receive it (Acts 13:48; 16:40). When Cornelius was receptive, God sent Peter to tell him, ". . .Whosoever believeth in him [Christ] shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). And just when the Ethiopian's heart craved a more complete understanding of Scripture, Philip was sent by the Holy Spirit to preach unto him Jesus (Acts 8:35). And so it continues to be. Through energetic evangelistic and missionary outreach hungry hearts are satisfied with the truth.

Lloyd A. Larkin  
Baptist Mid-Missions, Emeritus