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How Do I Show Someone That Not Every Spirit Being Is Good?

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#STRask - Stand to Reason

Questions about how to show someone who thinks any spirit being is good that only Jesus is good and whether inner healing prayer is biblical.

* How would you show someone who thinks any spirit being is good that only Jesus is good?

* Is inner healing prayer biblical?

Transcript

(upbeat music) (bell dings) You're listening to "Stand to Reasons" hashtag #STRSQPodcast. I'm Amy Hall and Greg Kockel is here with me to answer your questions that you send on Twitter with the hashtag #STRSQ. Hence the name.

(laughs) Sometimes I wonder people who don't have Twitter, don't go on social media, they might not even understand what her name is about. I know this is a... Oh well, what are you gonna do? All right, let's start with a question from Lars. I actually previewed this in the last episode, Greg.

Did you say Mars? Lars. Oh, Lars, okay. How are you? We start getting questions from other planets and I know that... We really made it.

We really made it. We're a big success. (laughs) All right, how would you show someone who thinks any spirit being is good, that only Jesus is good/true God? Well, there's a little ambiguity in the question because that's a false dichotomy.

Any spirit is good or only Jesus is good because there is a host of angelic beings, of spirit beings, some are good and some are bad. Some are unfallen, some are fallen. The unfallen ones are used by God as a host to accomplish certain ends.

So I wouldn't say that Jesus is the only good one. I'm not sure then what the question is,

what he's getting at with the question. What do you think, Amy? Well, maybe it's somebody who's trying to contact spirit beings and they think they don't think there's any danger in that.

So I guess you could answer two questions. One, how do you convince someone that not all spirits are good? And number two, how would you convince people that Jesus is the best? So maybe you can answer them. All right, well, the first question, I think I would be inclined to affirm their acknowledgement of the spirit realm.

I said, you know what, I'm with you. There's a whole world out there that we can't see that is very real. It has an impact on things that happen in our lives and on the earth, okay? But then I'd ask the question, why would you think? And maybe this is where the burden of proof can be shifted a little bit.

Why would you think that all the spirits are good spirits? And I don't know what they'd say. They probably would say, well, they're not all good. They're some are bad.

Okay, well, how do you know the difference? Well, I just, if they tell me to do good things, then that's a good spirit. If they tell me to do bad things, then that's a bad spirit, okay? And at this point, at least I get 'em talking about it a little bit and build a nice interactive relationship where I can affirm what I can properly affirm. And then I think what I'd say is, well, I'm concerned about this because God warned against that kind of thing.

Now, I'm choosing my words carefully. I'm not saying the Bible warns against it. And the reason I'm not saying it that way is because it's easy for people to objectify the book.

Well, that's your book. It's not my book. But what I say, if I say God warns against it, now I'm talking about the individual.

Now, it's maybe a small difference in the conversation, but to me it is a difference. I want him to know that God talks about this and he talks about it in Deuteronomy. And I'm not sure if I'm gonna be able to find the passage just kinda on the fly here.

But what he does is when he talks about it, he condemns mediums and we see an outworking of this in for Samuel where Saul is trying to contact Samuel who has died and Saul's in trouble. And he needs Samuel's counsel and Saul's in trouble because he has not been obeying God, then Samuel is dead so he gets the witch of Endor and he disguises himself and has her conjure Samuel. Now, from the details there, it's pretty clear that she's even surprised that Samuel shows up.

Okay, but Samuel chastises Saul and then condemns him and Saul dies the next day along with his sons, including Jonathan in the battle according to the prophetic word of Samuel. But it's clear in the passage that counseling with a witch who can conjure a spirit is my violation of law, it's a capital crime. Okay, why would God say don't do this?

And the reason is is because there are spiritual powers out there and they're not always good.

And you don't need to conjure to get what needs to be done according to God. All that does is expose you to harm. And of course, this is characteristic.

You talk to people who've been in the occult and who've come out of it, they can tell you the stories. That's not my background, but I've talked to people, I've known people who have. And it's pretty, it's scary.

There is a supernatural world out there and it's dangerous. And so if you're talking with somebody offering, this is what God says about this, he condemns it. Okay, because there's danger there.

So I'm concerned about you you could say, we talk about your Lars, not Mars, but Lars, you can say to your friend, I'm concerned about you because the reality is there is a spiritual realm out there, we both agree, but there is so much darkness in that spiritual realm. And we can't be counted on to be able to tell the difference. This is why God says, don't mess with it at all, trust in me.

Do what I say, I know what's going on out there. And that would be the kind of counsel I guess I would give in that circumstance, Amy. - Well, a couple things, Greg.

First of all, you mentioned people who have come out of this. If you just look at the fruit of the people who have engaged in occult practices and tried to contact spirits and things like that, a lot of people actually lose their minds. It's a very dangerous practice.

All you have to do is look at what's happened to people who have gone down this road. And I know living in LA, I have known more than a few people who have been involved in occult things. And this is, I don't know if you've ever seen this before, Greg, but there is a look that I've learned to recognize in people.

And even after I talk to them for a little bit and then I find out they work at some spiritual place, there's a look in their eyes that I can recognize now of people who are, it's this kind of empty, I don't know how to describe it. Maybe somebody out there has seen it too, but the fruit of this is not great. Now, how would I maybe try and show that Jesus is the one you should go to? I think what I would try to do is show how much better he is because our relationship with him is completely different from the kind of relationship people have with other spirits.

When people are contacting spirits, generally they're trying to manipulate them in some way. They're trying to get something, they're trying to use them in some way. It's not about getting to know them.

That's right, it's classic paganism. That's what we were talking about in the last show.

Yeah, that's what they're trying to do.

So what you might wanna do is say, look, this is what people are doing when they're talking to those spirits. And to me, that seems empty and cold and ugly. Now, when we come to Jesus, we're not coming to him to say certain things, to get the right things, to manipulate him, to do our bidding.

That's not what it's about. What it's about is actually loving him and referencing him and submitting to him. He is our Lord.

Nobody, I don't hear people talking generally, maybe there are some out there, but talking about the spirits that they're contacting in that way. Jesus is someone that we are willing to submit ourselves to because he is good, because we know he has our best interest in heart, that he is working for our good. We know that he is perfectly good.

And we are coming to him because we wanna be with him. That's what's happening there. It's a completely different type of thing.

And so, maybe what you might wanna do, Lars, is kind of stir up that desire for something greater than us rather than something we wanna manipulate and use for our own desires. - Remember also that Jesus isn't just an alternate spirit that's better than the other ones. He is Emmanuel.

He is God with us. He is the only one who is God in human flesh. So he occupies an absolutely unique position.

The book of Hebrews, this is the main theme of the book of Hebrews. Jesus is not like angels. He's not like other sacrifices.

He's not like the Aaronic priesthood, Levitical priesthood. He is absolutely unique because he is God with us. And that changes everything.

- So ultimately, if there are spirits out there that are bad, you don't wanna mess with them. If there are spirits out there that are good, those spirits are subjected to Jesus. Jesus is the head of all things.

All of the good spirits, which we would say are angels, they're all under Jesus. So why would you go to them and not go to Jesus? - Let Jesus send whoever he wants to send. And that happens on occasion we see in the book of Acts in other places, the Bible, God sends angels for purposes.

But they aren't, I don't think there's any occasion where a person is praying for an angel to do something for them. I can't think of that. I think it happens in their awareness.

- And they certainly don't pray to angels. - They certainly don't pray to angels. Now there is an angel, angels in the book of Revelation and then there's John, he falls down in front

of the angel and he says, don't do that, man.

I'm not God, I'm just me. I'm just an angel. Worship God alone.

But there are responses to those they show up. But God is the sender. God is the one commissioning them as messengers.

That's what uncolas means, a messenger. And God's the one who's in charge of that, not us. So for all those reasons, hopefully you can stir up a desire for Jesus in the midst of that and hopefully that helps.

Okay, let's go into a question from Rude Beggas, our bad. The Rude Beggas are back, Greg. - Okay.

- It's been a while. All right, is inner healing prayer biblical? A prayer leader asked me to picture Jesus and asked me every detail I saw, I saw nothing. And all that Jesus said to me, nothing.

Did this feel wrong because I am not close enough with Jesus to hear him or is the practice misleading? - Well, being close enough to Jesus to hear him is a misconception that a lot of people fall into regarding God. If Jesus is speaking and you're not hearing, that means Jesus is trying to do something that he's not accomplishing. Presumptively, if he is speaking to you, he is trying to communicate to you.

But you are doing something, presumptively, that is interfering with that. And this to me is at the heart of learning to hear the voice of God and trying to hear God and all of the stuff. Because that, if you're trying to hear God, it means that God is speaking, that there's something to hear, but he's not doing what he needs to do for you to hear him.

He's whispering, you know, but there is not an incident in this entire scripture that I've ever found where that's the case. Whenever God attempts to communicate with somebody, he succeeds because he is, hmm, how does this go? God, God doesn't try. He's not a wannabe, he's a bee.

He does it. Whatever he exercises his will to accomplish, he accomplishes. So there is no circumstance where God is speaking and you're not hearing him, okay? That's a complete libel, in my view, on the character of God.

And of course, it's not biblical. Incidentally, if the question, I think that's the way it started, is it, how did you read that? - Is inner healing prayer biblical? - It's a bit, okay, the way to find out whether it's biblical is to see if it's in the Bible. Okay, so that's another part of it.

A lot of what we're talking about are these things in the Bible. And no, we don't have these things in the Bible. And the trying to hear from God who's speaking, but you can't

hear, has another theological problem and that is God doesn't try.

God doesn't just whisper and then, you know, he accomplishes what he even saw when he's unregenerate, the greatest of all sinners, according to his own confession in Timothy and persecuting the church, murdering Christians, didn't have any trouble hearing God. Jesus, when Jesus spoke to him on the road to Damascus, this is a total mischaracterization of God, but you hear it a lot. I'm just saying this is the rule of thumb you apply, okay? So first of all, don't worry about that.

The inner healing though is another issue. Is healing available to us? Well, sure, in principle, we see this happening, but we don't see inner healing happening. I'm not exactly sure why, because I don't dispute the possibility to say that something is not biblical.

Let's see, non-biblical and unbiblical are two different things. I think this might be a specific practice called inner healing prayer. Well, let me just speak to it generally.

There's a difference between being unbiblical and non-biblical. Okay, things that are unbiblical are contrary to scripture. And sometimes there's an argument from silence, okay? Like hearing for the voice of God, the way people talk about it is not in the scripture.

And so that would, you can say that's unbiblical, but I also think it's non-biblical for other reasons. This presumes that everybody gets their private revelation from God, that's a, deserves it in virtue of being a Christian. And this is a radical claim that needs justification given the weight and the significance of the claim.

It needs justification for scripture. So I would say it's not just unbiblical, non-biblical, that whole procedure is unbiblical. It's contrary to what scripture teaches, we ought to expect, okay? No, God could do it every once.

And he does penetrate different times, communicating to different people. I'm not against that. The question is whether this is what we all need to get.

Okay, that's one thing. Inner healing is, I would say, is non-biblical. We don't have evidences of it.

And I don't see any reason why it would be problematic theologically 'cause people do have wounds in their hearts. But I went through Kyners book, Craig Kyners book, two books, two volumes on miracles. I didn't read every word, but I was scanning through trying to find evidences of inner healing, emotional healing, psychological healing in there, in miracles.

And if I ever see him at ETS or something, he's still alive. Oh, I should ask him instead of trying to page through two big volumes. But I never saw anything that implied that there

was inner healing going on other than see a demonic possession that the demon is cast out, that kind of thing.

Probably hard to document something like that. Yeah, it would be hard to document. That's a good point.

So although you could have a person self attesting about it, I said, "Look, this is what happened to me. "I used to be this." And I certainly have heard enough from other people to hear that they have had emotional problems that inner wounds that prayer and pursuing God has resolved. And God did do a healing in them.

So I'm not contesting that it happens. I'm just wondering about the discipline of it. And sometimes people who are really given to inner healing prayer or soaking prayer, which I'm not condemning at all, and prayer is great.

But sometimes it's like, okay, they're healed today, next week now they've got to get healed again. You know, and so I just, I don't know about the efficacy on a broad scale. I think it's never wrong to pray and ask God regarding some emotional need that you have.

You know, be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, make your request known to God. Philippians what, for or their mouths. So yeah, that's fine.

Now, I understand that there are whole disciplines and enterprises and ministries of soaking prayer and healing prayer. And I think that there's efficacy probably of some of them, but I don't know, I certainly am not convinced that it's a panacea, that this is the way to get all of these things solved. Sometimes you live with problems, as we've discussed in the past, and struggle with them your whole life.

And there's no guarantee that these challenges that we face, whether external or internal, whether circumstance or relationships or emotional wounds, are themselves going to be healed. There's no guarantee for that. We can pursue it, do what we can.

And as long as it's not non-biblical, contrary to his whose scripture in the way things are being processed, I don't think there's a problem. But just don't think that it's a panacea, and this is the way things are gonna get solved, because though sometimes it's the way, it's not always the way. - So it's unclear to me what this particular thing he's describing, assuming this, I actually don't know if this is a matter of women, I just realized, but.

- Yeah, it's rude to Bega. - Rude of Begas are bad. Rude of Begas are good is a woman, I know, because I've actually met her, but I don't know about Rude of Begas or Bad.

So this idea that you are supposed to picture Jesus and describe him and say what he's saying to you, it's unclear to me if part of this is the person who's leading this prayer,

trying to understand how you view Jesus, what your relationship is like with him, or if they're actually asking you to have some sort of mystical encounter with Jesus, if it's the second, I think that's really dangerous, because now you are putting yourself in the position where you're kind of being pressured to imagine certain things that Jesus is saying, and then are you going to take those things as actually him speaking those things? There's no safety there with some sort of objective message which is in the Bible. I mean, that's where we get our objective messages from Jesus and to kind of on demand, ask for some sort of words from Jesus to heal us. That seems really dangerous.

A lot of people right now who are deconstructing, if you look into their stories, what you ultimately find out is that many of them are... - Deconstructing in the sense that moving away from Christianity and deconverting. - This whole kind of deconstruction - Because they were using movement. - In a different way earlier.

- That's right. I think that was a previous episode. - Same thing though.

- Yes, same word. So this idea is when you look into their stories, often what they'll say is, I didn't get this from the Bible. I got this from sitting in front of Jesus in some sort of mystical experience.

And sometimes you don't find that out until you're way into their, all their ideas and you're thinking, how did they square that with this and the Bible and this and the Bible? And then you find out, oh, they didn't square it with the Bible. - Yeah, who's the areaopagus guy from Michigan that went south, the big giant church, they're a rub bill. - Yeah, did he do this? - No, he says he learned more.

The most he ever learned about Jesus was from Oprah Winfrey. So it's like, this is where you're getting your information from, kind of thing. There may be something else going on here that is not problematic.

And sometimes we imagine, let me back up and use illustration so that people have seen this poster called footsteps and it's characterizing an interaction with God, where were you? I only saw one set of footsteps the whole time. You were you weren't walking next to me through this trial in my life, footsteps in the sand. He said that Jesus said, that's 'cause I was carrying during that time, this is kind of the, which is a really sweet kind of characterization.

But notice that what the poster in the verse there is meant to communicate is to take a concept of God's care for us and Jesus care for, and reify it, make it more concrete for us. And I think sometimes when we're asked, just imagine Jesus putting his arms around you right now. Okay, I don't have a problem with that because or something like this saying, I love you are saying, you're the lost sheep and he's going out after you and he's looking for you.

And so there are biblical notions, biblical concepts that you are imagining Jesus performing on your behalf. I don't have a problem with that because I think it's just in a sense, reifying or making concrete biblical notions that may not be clear to people. And if they start picturing Jesus doing it, look at Jesus taking care of the little children here and mark whatever 14, wait, I sat at the sermon on Sunday, so it's fresh in my mind.

Look at him doing that. This is the way he loves us too. And he gathers us around him, imagine him holding you like that and say, permit the children to come to me kind of thing.

That I think is okay. That isn't trying to conjure a mystical experience. It is trying to take a biblical characterization of Jesus and clarifying it, making it more concrete, reifying it in your own mind.

- Yeah, I agree with you. That's why I say, I'm not sure exactly what he's describing here when he says that he's supposed to say what Jesus is saying to him in that moment. So that's why I'm really glad you said that, Greg, 'cause I do think those are two different things.

If you're seeking special messages from Jesus, I don't think that's a good idea. But if you're taking messages from the Bible and you are picturing Jesus, saying certain biblical things to you, not that you think he's giving you a special message, but that you're actually trying to kind of take this message into your heart by experiencing Jesus, saying it directly to you, you're right. I think those are two different things.

- Yeah, by the way, this is a concern I have with Jesus calling that whole series that is a social movement and a lot of people use that material. But the gal Sarah, what's her name? - I think it's Sarah Young. - Sarah Young, I think what she's trying to do is take the biblical characterization of Jesus and reify it and make it kind of real in particular words for us.

But what she does is she puts all these words into Jesus' mouth. And what I understand is, at least initially when she was writing this, she was getting this information from Jesus himself. This was like not exactly automatic writing, but something like that.

And it's in the forward for her first book, which it's no longer in there. They took that out, but this reveals like, "Wait a minute, this is mystical experience thing." And I'm never comfortable with people saying, "Here's what Jesus is saying." And you make up this long thing that may characterize some truths about Jesus, yet at the same time you're putting this in Jesus' words, and this is your thing, and you're taking this as if it were the Bible. And this is, I think, one of the reasons is so popular, because to some degree she's tried to take these notions and make them more concrete for people, but she's done it by having Jesus talk extensively.

And this way I think creates all kinds of other problems. So I don't recommend the material, but there were the last, I just thought I mentioned it here. - All right, thank you Lars and Ruda Vegas are bad.

Nice to hear from you again, Ruda Vegas. If you'd like to give us a question, you can send that on Twitter with the hashtag #strask, or you can go through our website, and we look forward to hearing from you. This is Amy Hall and Greg Cocle for Stand to Reason.

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