

THINGS GOD CANNOT DO**THE PLEASANT VIEW PLUMB LINE**

Both Christians and atheists generally have assumed that if the God depicted in the Bible exists, He can do **anything**—since He is represented as being all-powerful. However, this assumption is incorrect. The Bible does not claim that the omnipotence of God implies that He can do anything and everything. In reality, “omnipotence” does not, and cannot, apply to that which does not lend itself to power. Skeptics and atheists have posed queries that they feel nullify the notion of omnipotence, thereby demonstrating the nonexistence of God. For example, “Can God create a boulder so large that He, Himself, cannot lift it?”

Separate and apart from the fact that God is not, Himself, physical, and that He created the entire physical Universe, though He is metaphysical and transcendent of the Universe, the question is a **conceptual absurdity**. It’s like asking, “Can God create a round square or a four-sided triangle?” No, He cannot—but not for the reasons implied by the atheist: that He does not exist or that He is not omnipotent. Rather, it is because the question is, itself, **self-contradictory and incoherent**. It is nonsensical terminology. Rather, than saying God **cannot** do such things, it would be more in harmony with the truth to say simply that such things **cannot be done at all!** God is infinite in power, but power meaningfully relates only to what can be done, to what is **possible** of accomplishment—**not** to what is **impossible!** It is absurd to speak of any power (even **infinite** power) being able to do what simply cannot be done. Logical absurdities do not lend themselves to being accomplished, and so, **are not subject to power**, not even to **infinite** power (see Warren, 1972, pp. 27ff).

While God **can** do whatever is **possible** to be done, in reality, He **will** do only what is in harmony with **His** nature. Further, to suggest that God is deficient or limited in power if He cannot create a rock so large that He cannot lift, is to imply that He **could** do so if He simply had **more** power. But this is false. Creating a rock that He, Himself, cannot lift, or creating a four-sided triangle, or making a ball that is at the same time both white all over and black all over, or creating a ninety-year-old teenager, or making a car that is larger on the inside than it is on the outside—to propose such things is to affirm logical contradictions and absurdities. Such propositions do not really say anything at all. Though one can imagine logical absurdities that cannot be accomplished, they do not constitute a telling blow against the view that God is infinite in power.

So, no, the concept of “omnipotence” does not mean that there are no limits to what an omnipotent being can do. In fact, the Bible pinpoints specific things that God **cannot** do. For example, the Bible states unequivocally that God cannot lie (Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; 2 Timothy 2:13; Titus 1:2). He is a Being whose very essence entails truthfulness. Falsehood is completely out of harmony with His divine nature. Further, God cannot be tempted by evil (James 1:13).

Another impossibility pertaining to God’s power is the fact that He shows no partiality or favoritism (Deuteronomy 10:17; Romans 2:11; Colossians 3:25; 1 Peter 1:17). He is “open and above board” - evenhanded—with all His creatures. He can be counted on to interact with human beings as He said He would. His treatment of us centers on our own self-chosen behavior—not on our ethnicity or skin color (Acts 10:34-35; 1 Samuel 16:7).

A third instance that qualifies the meaning of “omnipotent” is seen in God’s inability to forgive the individual who will not repent and forsake his or her sin (Joshua 24:19; Proverbs 28:13; Matthew 6:15; 18:35; Luke 13:3,5). As great and as magnificent as the mercy and forgiveness of God are, it is impossible to bestow forgiveness upon the person who does not seek that forgiveness through any other avenue than the blood of Jesus and obedience to the Gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16; 2:8; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Peter 4:17).

The more one studies the Bible, examining the attributes and characteristics of the God depicted there, the more one is struck with (1) the inspiration of the Bible—since its skillful handling of such matters places it beyond the charge of successful contradiction, and (2) awe at the infinitude of God. Not one of the factors discussed in this article reflects adversely upon the reality of God’s omnipotence. But it is abundantly clear that a person may so live as to render the God of heaven incapable of coming to that

“...then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel...” (Amos 7:8)

**CAN THESE BONES LIVE? -  
HOPE RENEWED**

Text: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Hope Renewed Amidst \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

II. Hope Renewed Amidst \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

III. Hope Renewed Amidst \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

**THE REST IS GRAVY**

When our only son was a small boy, he spent some time in the hospital and was diagnosed with Kawaski's Disease. This disease is so uncommon that most of the medical community at both Emory and Egglestone Hospitals paraded by to witness this rare malady.

The greatest concern from the disease was long-term damage to his heart with future repercussions in terms of restricted activity and no athletics. Over the course of time, he was given a clean bill of health and is now a fit and athletic nineteen-year-old.

I learned a great number of things during his stay in the hospital. Things like how much a grown man could love a little boy...how when a husband and wife love each other it makes any burden lighter...and, not the least of which, how fragile life really is.

As our son improved and we pulled him up and down the hospital corridors in a little red Radio Flyer wagon, we saw other children who were not so fortunate. Some had inoperable tumors and would never celebrate their fifth birthday. Some would take a wagon ride because they lay comatose.

I'll tell you this: if you can sneak onto your child's room at night after he's asleep and you can lay your hand on his chest and feel the beating of his heart, then you are the most blessed.

The rest is gravy!

-Randy Medlin

person's aid. It is imperative that every human being recognizes the need to understand His will and to conform one's behavior to that will. It is imperative that every individual avoid placing self in the precarious position of being in need of **that which God cannot do.**

-Dave Miller

**GREAT NEWS IN TENNESSEE**

Pro-life Tennesseans ended the state Legislative session with an impressive win on a long sought priority: removal of preferential treatment for Planned Parenthood, the state's largest promoter and provider of abortion services.

By strong majorities of 25-7 in the state Senate and 69-22 in the state House, pro-life legislators in both parties took action to remove language first placed into Tennessee law during the early 1970s which specifically named abortion provider Planned Parenthood as an officially recognized adjunct to state family planning services.

In addition to removing the clause, pro-life legislators enacted language which mandates that the Tennessee Department of Health give priority and preference to local public health departments in the awarding of family planning funds rather than private, non-profit organizations.

**Tennessee Right to Life expresses profound gratitude to members of the General Assembly who supported the efforts to protect Tennessee tax payers, abortion vulnerable women and unborn children with passage of SB 470 and HB 1756.**

"This has been a pro-life priority for many years and Right to Life is grateful for the determined legislative leadership in both houses which removed preferential treatment for this organization profiting from the practice and promotion of abortion," said Brian Harris, the organization's president. "Giving first priority to local health departments strengthens the provision of services to vulnerable populations without favoring an entity which has a significant financial interest in the success or failure of those services," Harris said.

The Legislature's action ends a session marked by Right to Life gains including first House passage of SJR 127, a long sought proposed constitutional amendment which would allow Tennessee's legislators to restore the state's court-stricken protections such as informed consent for women considering abortion, a 48 hour waiting period and the regulation of abortion facilities in Tennessee. The resolution was sponsored by Senator Diane Black and Representative Dedra Maggart, Hendersonville with strong support from Representatives Charles Curtiss, Curt Cobb, and Bill Dunn. It easily passed the Senate in March 24-8 and the House during Mat, 77-21.

**"Tennessee is a strongly pro-life state with new legislative leadership, the General Assembly's actions are finally beginning to mirror the majority's life-affirming views,"** said Harris.

-Ed Albin  
via Bulletin Briefs

A FOUNDATION ON WHICH WE CAN RELY

Ask any young child what kind of foundation a wise man builds his house upon and the immediate answer will be that “the wise man built his house upon a rock.” Such wisdom is illustrated in the firmness and surety of the foundation. A rock is a firm and steady foundation. It represents strength and steadfastness, something on which we can rely. By contrast, there are equally foundations that present no surety, no strength, no steadfastness.

Christ mentioned both on one occasion in illustrating an essential truth to those gathered near the Mount of Olives:

“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And ever one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it” (Matthew 7:24-27).

From these words it is obvious that there is a spiritual foundation on which we can rely, one that has been and can only be provided by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is a foundation that represents assurance and hope looking ahead toward the many obstacles of life and ultimately the great hereafter in eternity. What is it, though, about this foundation that makes it so special above any other to which man could potentially turn?

**Because Jesus is it.** If it were not already obvious, perhaps it would be beneficial to state the case as to who serves in the capacity of Christianity’s foundation. Paul identified Jesus Christ to be that foundation: “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11). Or more specifically, it might be said that Jesus’ divine nature as God’s only begotten Son serves as the foundation of Christianity. Jesus clarified it this way in Caesarea Philippi when after Peter confessed Him as such, He replied, “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). That rock was the bedrock truth of Christ’s Sonship that would serve as the kingdom’s foundation. And seeing Jesus pictured and described the way He is throughout scripture, it becomes clear that only He could serve in that capacity. By prophecy Isaiah described Him in this way: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). Nobody else did or could meet such a glorious expectation—only Jesus. Thus, this is a foundation upon which we can rely because that foundation is Jesus.

**Because the apostles laid it.** The Bible’s clarity as to the apostles’ function in the early days of the church’s existence is obvious. Jesus on more than one occasion made reference to their immediate responsibilities after His departure (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). They were to forge the way with gospel truth, blazing the trail for those who would come afterward, and lay the foundation upon which others would later build. As an apostle Paul explained this from the context of his personal application and the broader application by all apostles: “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon” (1 Corinthians 3:10). Elsewhere he also illustrated this point by saying: “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone...” (Ephesians 2:19-20). Why would I not wish to build my life upon the same foundation laid by the *inspired* apostles? Thus it is on that foundation I can rely.

**Because God provided it.** When in 1 Corinthians 3:10 Paul mentioned his personal responsibility as an apostle to lay that spiritual foundation, he specified that it was “given unto” him. From who did he receive such authority and inspired ability? Only from God who provided it. Literally, then, this foundation is God’s Divine plan, not the work of mere men. As Paul would go on to point out (vs. 12-15), this foundation is one that can stand amidst the trials of fire it must face daily. Its origin is heavenly, its strength is perfect, and its ability is infinite. The foundation upon which we can rely is from God Himself—how could we not trust?

There are few things in life about which we can be sure. We seemingly are betrayed and tricked so often that we find it hard to truly trust anything or anybody. Jesus, though, serves as the foundation upon which we can rely. Will we be wise and build thereon?