

# *God Demands All*

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The biblical teaching is clear that the Lord's Church is to keep itself pure and faithful. This will involve many elements, but two primary principles are as follows: (1) purity of the visible church in regards to doctrine and life and (2) an observable love and oneness among *all* true Christians. These two principles are based off of the character of God Himself, since God is first holy and second love. It seems that within our progressive secular society today different ideological and philosophical shifts have taken place. Any true Christian will and must admit that there are serious challenges to the work of engaging the lost world with the gospel within today's world. We are living in a Post-Christian culture, nothing from the Bible is assumed to be true anymore in our society. In fact, due to liberal biblical criticism and an overall attitude of skepticism placed alongside very hedonistic (the pursuit of pleasure seeking) cultural values, the Church meets more and more people with a secular liberal worldview, rather than a Christian biblical worldview. For example, one philosophy that isn't going to roll over and play dead as we evangelize is called pantheism. Pantheism says there is no Creator beyond the universe; rather, Creator and creation are just two different ways of viewing one reality. This view is held by many who worship mother earth, god is in the streams, the woods, the deer stand, pontoon boat, trees, rocks, etc. It finds its roots in early Greek philosophy and Stoic philosophy (Acts 17:18). The god of pantheism makes no demands of us at all. This view is held today in what is known as the New Age movement. We see it in practice on Earth Day ever year.

The reason it is popular and affirming is because, in believing in such a god as this it seems to be very attractive precisely for this reason. We get all the emotional comfort of belief in God with none of the unpleasant consequences. This is what is creeping into the Lord's Church. A tame god that gives us the wonderful thrill of religion without the cross, dying to self, personal holiness and repentance. Yet there are still many who deny the pantheistic life-force god and desire more of a personal god, but as long as he doesn't interfere in my life. Instead of a Father in heaven we want a grandfather in heaven, who is tolerant with same sex marriage, or a gender of your choosing, or maybe just wants to see you smile and be morally reformed.

The reality is the god of pantheism is not the same as the God of the bible. The ever-present God makes demands of us all. And not just any demands. He is not a personal butler or tax collector, asking for a percentage of your time and resources and leaving the rest to you. As your Creator and Author, He demands all of you. He is the Maker; you are the made. He is the Potter you are the clay in the Potter's hands. Therefore, He has all rights and all claims to your ultimate devotion and deep reverent affection. This is what C.S. Lewis referred to as the "absolutely unavoidable 'either-or'". We live in a world of only two roads, we must reject the lie, in the end, all paths lead to the same place. Now days, the narrow and the broad way have the cross symbol on them. We must choose, and our choice will have an eternal consequence.

*Matthew 12:30, "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters."*