

## Scriptures and Doctrine :: Question Concerning Popular Teachers

### Question Concerning Popular Teachers - posted by Robert\_79, on: 2008/1/19 3:13

Recently, I was sent a book by Charles Ryrie called *So Great Salvation* and a book by Charles Stanley called *Eternal Security*. I read them. And I have a question for you all: These men are highly respected teachers in the evangelical community. Based on some of the teachings they shared, I believe they are false teachers espousing heresy. Does this seem too strong? I've been told that they teach many good things, but I believe both are wrong about the essential nature of salvation.

Ryrie teaches that repentance (as historical Christianity understands it) is not necessary for salvation. (p.99) He draws a very sharp line between converts and disciples, and says discipleship is unnecessary for salvation (p.75-76). He says faith in Jesus is committing our eternal destiny to Him, but not necessarily committing our life on earth to Him (p. 123). He says that those who teach what he calls "Lordship salvation" are teaching a false gospel. He gives 3 reasons why people lack assurance (p.142), but never even mentions the biggest one: many people struggle with assurance because they are not saved.

Stanley's teaching is even worse than Ryrie's. He mentions "a Christian who at no point in his entire life bore any eternal fruit. And yet his salvation is never jeopardized." He also says, "there are Christians who show no evidence of their Christianity as well." And "Consequently, God does not require a constant attitude of faith in order to be saved -- only an act of faith." And "It is a singular moment in time wherein we take what God has offered." And "... You can't sin and live like the devil down here and get by with it even as a believer. The Bible says you will lose your reward but you'll be saved so as by fire. You won't lose your salvation, but there's a whole lot to lose, brother, by sinful living."

Stanley also says this: "Where is this place represented by the 'outer darkness' in Jesus' parables? To be in the 'outer darkness' is to be in the kingdom of God but outside the circle of men and women whose faithfulness on this earth earned them a special rank or position of authority. The 'outer darkness' represents not so much an actual place as it does a sphere of influence and privilege"

You don't have to repent to be saved??? You don't have to submit to Christ to be saved??? Salvation is much like a flu shot??? Outer darkness is heaven??? What "gospel" is this?

I was shocked in reading these two books from men I grew up having some familiarity with their names, and who have great respect in evangelical circles today. To say they are false teachers is a serious charge. But according to the Scriptures, which speak clearly on repentance, submission, and regeneration, I believe these teachings to be very, very dangerous and false. You can be wrong about many things, but when you begin making the door wide when Jesus made it narrow, I would contend you have become a false teacher.

Several brothers feel that I am much too strong in stating these things. Any thoughts? Insight? I want to be careful not to accuse a brother, but also want to warn my brothers to stay away from false prophets. I would say that Charles Stanley is not as obviously a false prophet as Joel Osteen, but I would warn men to stay away from him in the same way I would warn them to stay away from Osteen, because what he teaches about salvation is wrong. If you have a problem in a building on the 14th story, it isn't good. But if your foundation is crumbling, great will be the fall of your building.

When you tell men that are lost that all they need to do to go to heaven is "believe" in Jesus, say a prayer, and then teach that they can (not necessarily that they should, but that they can) go on living in sin, and still go to heaven, I believe that you make many men two-fold sons of hell. It is hard to share the Gospel with a lost man who is certain he is saved.

Thanks for reading and responding. May God bless you all.

**Re: Question Concerning Popular Teachers - posted by intrcssr83 (), on: 2008/1/19 5:59**

I would highly recommend as compulsory reading John MacArthur's *The Gospel According to Jesus* as a counter to the teaching you describe with regards to the "Lordship Salvation" vs "Easy-Believism" issue.

Here's a sermon by Rick Holland, associate pastor for College Ministry at MacArthur's Grace Community Church where he gives ([http://audio.gracechurch.org/filetransfer.asp?ministry\\_id5&id2403&fn07022000](http://audio.gracechurch.org/filetransfer.asp?ministry_id5&id2403&fn07022000) July 2 2000 - A Primer On Lordship Salvation.mp3&urlmp3search.asp) A Primer on Lordship Salvation

Quote:

-----by Robert\_79 on 2008/1/19 18:13:28

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Sadly, the issue is not confined to the western church. (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v10lue7bhck0>) Check out this clip of Ps Joseph Prince from Singapore. First half starts off as orthodox, second is exactly what you describe.

**Re: Question Concerning Popular Teachers, on: 2008/1/19 10:36**

Hi Robert

Your post saddened me, because I stayed for a while with friends who had the God channel, and Charles Stanley was my favourite Bible teacher on there. I liked his gentle but powerful style, his clarity in explaining the Word and his depth of scholarship.

If his teaching on this subject is truly as you say, then my reaction is "How are the mighty fallen!"

Are you certain that he wasn't simply emphasising the doctrine of "eternal security", and maybe gave the wrong impression? It doesn't sound like it, but I suppose I'm trying to find excuses for him! Could he *really* have meant that "saying the sinner's prayer" is *all* there is to salvation?

I suppose this could be a logical conclusion if one believes very strongly in "once saved always saved", but I don't know of any - even the strongest Calvinist - who would dream of supporting that view!

Quote:

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I believe that there *is* a grain of truth here, but that makes it, if anything, more dangerous than a more obvious error.

To show what I mean, let's look at the opposite error - that of warning someone so strongly of the danger of hell fire if they sin, that a weak but genuine believer will be brought to despair of ever having any assurance. That was my experience (and no doubt many others') when I first came to the Lord. Even true repentance was delayed because I was so full of unreasonable guilt already. Yet I was genuinely born again (never said the "sinners' prayer", the Lord did it a different way).

This just shows how carefully we have to balance Paul's teaching, of salvation being all of grace through faith, with James' demand that we *show* our faith by our behaviour.

If we don't, it actually shows that the faith isn't real.

To go back to the true Source, Jesus said that anyone who comes to Him He will *never* cast out. **But** He also said, "if you love me, keep my commandments", as *the* condition of receiving the Holy Spirit. And if we don't have His Spirit we d

on't belong to Him anyway!

I experienced that "singular moment in time wherein we take what God has offered", sure enough (unlike some equally genuine Christians. I could give you an exact date and the time to within an hour!); but that meant my whole life was changed from that moment on.

You can't truly receive the Lord without being transformed inwardly; and you can't be transformed inwardly without it showing outwardly!

And yet there *are* those who go astray from God after a genuine new birth. Sometimes there is no longer any evidence that they were ever saved, except that they maybe still believe in God.

What about Samson? I know he's an OT example, but he's the best illustration of this that I can think of. He lived his life as he wanted, behaved totally amorally, gave in to his impulses, whether desire for a woman or uncontrollable rage, (which God actually made use of, through the gift of supernatural strength). Yet he's named as one of the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11!!!

He did apparently repent at the end of his life, but ...

I hope this hasn't confused the issue, but these are just some thoughts.

Like you, I am shocked...

in Him

Jeannette

**Re: - posted by davyman, on: 2008/1/19 11:05**

I am also saddened, though not shocked. These are the prime examples of American Evangelicalism. In this form, Christianity is reduced to a mere club. "You're in if you say you're in." It is the epitome of Finneyism, decisional salvation. The adherent merely says the requisite "prayer," and vooosh! he's a Christian. Now, of course, he must buy the T-shirt, attend a self-esteem building church, and seek wealth and prosperity. It's the American way of life! If he fails to do this, no problem! These fine Arminian preachers have borrowed the doctrine of perseverance from their Calvinist brethren and tweaked to mean "once you said the prayer, you're always in!"

So the problem presents itself, what about old Joe who said the prayer but continues to beat his wife, frequent prostitutes and drink like a fish? Oh, he's just going to "Little Heaven," which is like "Big Heaven" but darker.

Charles and Charles, brothers, repent of this heresy!

SDG,

Dave

**Re: Question Concerning Popular Teachers - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/1/19 12:29**

Quote:

Robert\_79 wrote:

I was shocked in reading these two books from men I grew up having some familiarity with their names, and who have great respect in evangelical circles today.

Robert, I am shocked at almost every minister today and even some of yesterday, I have even found some false teaching in some of C.S. Lewis's books we can all pick apart "any" minister if we go looking for bear we can find one. What I do is I let the Holy Spirit lead me to as what to intake and what to exhaust, because there is "no" perfect Pastors teaching a perfect gospel because even God said "No One" knows the Word good enough so we have to be able to discern through trusting in the Holy Spirit to direct us in what to soak up, The Word of God is called the Word of truth. It is the Spirit of truth that teaches us all things. Jesus said, "But when the Comforter comes, even the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, that one shall teach you all things, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you" (John 14:26). This is the promise Jesus gave!

The Bible makes it clear that the Word of truth works together with the Spirit of truth to "give understanding" to those who love God and seek His will. It is self-evident that it is "not possible" for the carnal mind, which is deceitful above all things (Jer. 17:9), to come to the knowledge of the truth of God. In fact, the carnal, unconverted mind is enmity (that is, hostile) toward God and is not willing to be subject to God's laws (Rom. 8:7).

Regardless of how brilliant or how great one's intellect may be, God's Word is not understood by human wisdom or reasoning. It is only through the Spirit of God that the Word of God is understood.. Are some Pastors worse than others? some would say yes, but see I look at a lie as a lie and I don't judge by different standards of lies so in my books there are all equally guilty, but on the other hand there are some things that I grasp from them all that Bless me because of the way I screen through the Holy Spirit, once we learn to do this we can benefit a little from them all.

**Re: - posted by SimpleLiving (), on: 2008/1/19 15:08**

Normally, I won't get into discussions like this because I'm still seeking God about how He feels about them. But I had to write to simply say that I am *not* shocked.

I do not know these men personally. I have never heard of Ryrie, unless he's the one that does the study Bible with that name. Even then I know only his name. But, I am familiar with Charles Stanley and am not surprised by his stance. Brother Paul Washer says that there are many ministers who are spending way too much time in the pulpit teaching when they ought to be home reading and praying. He didn't include any specific people in saying this, but I personally do include Charles Stanley in that.

His public life has not born good fruit. If his public fruit is not good, then neither is the fruit he bears in his private life, for a good tree cannot bear bad fruit. I won't go any deeper into it than that because I will not risk gossip.

Having come out of the Word of Faith background that I did, I fully understand why scripture says that not many of us should become teachers because of the greater accountability. Many, many, many public and popular American Bible teachers will have MUCH to answer for on before the Great Throne on Judgment Day.

**Re: Question Concerning Popular Teachers - posted by HomeFree99 (), on: 2008/1/19 19:28**

Quote:

Robert\_79 wrote:

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I was shocked when I listened to Stanley and he said that you could be a Christian and live however you want and do whatever you want, but never lose you salvation.

In regards to what he said about bearing fruit. Let's look at what Jesus said in John 15, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit."

Our lives should and will show Christ working in them. As Harold Vaughan says, "We aren't talking about a salvation of works, but a salvation that works." :-)

Jordan

**Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2008/1/19 22:01**

Quote:  
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HomeFree89 wrote:  
I was shocked when I listened to Stanley and he said that you could be a Christian and live however you want and do whatever you want, but never lose your salvation. Jordan  
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Well the idea of someone losing their salvation has been tossed back and forth as much as anything here, I personally don't believe or "could ever be convinced" that you can lose your salvation either, but that is just what I believe and nothing says I must believe what the majority or minority says there are just some things I have written in stone in my heart and this is one.

**Re: - posted by HomeFree89 (), on: 2008/1/20 16:20**

Quote:  
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MrBillPro wrote:  
  
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My point wasn't about him saying you can't lose your salvation, my point was that he said you could live however you want to and do whatever you want to and not lose it. I knew that Stanley believed in ES, which I disagree with, but it shocked me when he said what he said.

Jordan