

**General Topics :: early church fathers on lost of salvation****early church fathers on lost of salvation - posted by bible4life (), on: 2009/1/30 19:21**

Does anyone know any of the church fathers who didn't believe you can lose your salvation and believed onto the same level as calvinism that we our elected? What is the reason many of the church fathers believed you could lose your salvation, was it a lack of the opportunity to study the scriptures like we can today or what?

**Re: early church fathers on lost of salvation - posted by wayneman (), on: 2009/1/31 0:10**

Augustine believed in eternal security, AKA "the perseverance of the saints."

The doctrine that Christians can lose their salvation is based on three Scriptures: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." Heb. 6:4-6

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." Heb. 10:26-27

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them if they had not known the way of righteousness, than, after they had known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." II Pet. 2:20-21

These passages used to terrify me, because I was baptized and made a profession of faith, and got off to a pretty good start as a young disciple, and then backslid. Of course, interpretations of these verses vary widely, because they have to be weighed against the promises:

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I shall in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which has sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6:37-39

"And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." John 10:28-29

**Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2009/1/31 0:26**

The notion that few of the early believers held to perseverance of the saints is a myth.

I recommend Steve Lawson's audio series, "A Long Line of Godly Men," which is freely available here:

<http://www.newreformationministries.org/audio/mens-seminary/>

And is also in book form as "Foundations in Grace."

He provides passages from many of the Fathers which confirms a widespread belief in the doctrines commonly called Calvinistic, and others whose convictions were at least muddled, holding to both sides at once.

But in the end, there have been far more Roman Catholics than believers in salvation through faith alone. Are we to commend the multitude over the scriptures? And should we appeal to antiquity? There were more heretics than apostles even in Paul's day.

There have always been more students confused than correct on almost every point of biblical interest. The very fact that something is accepted by the religious majority gives pause to reconsider its verity, as does anything that comes naturally to the mind of man, such as human self-determination and decisive control in salvation.

Blessings in Christ's grace.

**Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiiss (), on: 2009/1/31 0:51**

Hi Wayne...

Quote:

-----The doctrine that Christians can lose their salvation is based on three Scriptures:  
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Two things: First, I wouldn't call this a "doctrine." It is certainly a set of beliefs held by some, but I would hardly call it an conclusive or decisive belief. Secondly, I wouldn't say that this notion is simply based upon THREE verses. I am persuaded that a person can run ahead (and away) from their faith in Christ (by falling back in love with this world)...but it isn't based upon the three verses that you quoted.

:-)

**Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2009/1/31 3:01**

Many of the early church fathers believed it was possible to be saved and then eternally end up lost.

I am speaking about the early church before augustine. From many of the writings we can see they did not hold the doctrine eternal security.

I can post quotes and excerpt for you later when i find the time to do so.

I'd recommend you read David Bercots book "will the real heretic please stand up" as it deals with many of the issues in today's church and compares what we believe and how we live to the early church what they believed and how they lived

**Re: early church fathers on lost of salvation - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2009/1/31 7:14**

There are many more quotes and passages than these i have posted, some i think explain more clearly what they believed, but it is very important to remember this is not scripture, you should not interpret scripture from what another man says or wrote. Let the Holy Spirit teach you himself from God's word. But these quotes show what **some** of the early church fathers believed.

It's also good to be careful, we often select quotes that are a few sentences short from a man's lifelong writings and say that this is what they believed.

But so often it is a journey, and i today don't hold the same beliefs i did when i first started this journey, and i think when my journey draws close to meet my Lord i probably changed some of the beliefs i hold today.

So for most justice it's good you read the church fathers for yourself. Then you will see they are filled with comfort for believers, full of warnings to the believers. And to me a very balanced and scriptural way of teaching saved by faith and works as the same coin but two sides to that coin, God's sovereignty and man's free will as another coin. And they do it so that it seems not to be contradictory to the other, just my observation.

Also i find quoting dangerous, since i have found numerous cults quote some old writer and different cults go on that doctrine with the support of some quotes, we can do the same with our favorite authors and get imbalanced in our understanding of scripture that is in perfect balance.

I personally believe it is possible to once know Christ, tasted his goodness and mercies and yet leave him and go back to the world self, and sin.

I base this on scripture not these men's teachings, but i also believe for those who want to be saved, want to follow Christ will never be lost, God is mighty to keep us and has promised he will finish the work he started.

Claim the promises of God and work out your salvation with fear and trembling. If you want to read about the other side so to speak, there are many writers from the reformed period and puritans that can bless you with their understanding and how they look upon eternal security.

But as i said, the best way is to read scripture and ask the spirit to show you.

God bless you

Clement of Rome

Seeing, therefore, that we are the portion of the Holy One, let us do all those things which pertain to holiness, avoiding all evil-speaking, all abominable and impure embraces, together with all drunkenness, seeking after change,(3) all abominable lusts, detestable adultery, and execrable pride. "For God," saith, "resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."(4) Let us cleave, then, to those to whom grace has been given by God. LET US CLOTHE OURSELVES WITH CONCORD AND HUMILITY, EVER EXERCISING SELF-CONTROL, STANDING FAR OFF FROM ALL WHISPERING AND EVIL-SPEAKING, BEING JUSTIFIED BY OUR WORKS, AND NOT OUR WORDS. For saith, "He that speaketh much, shall also hear much in answer. And does he that is ready in speech deem himself righteous? Blessed is he that is born of woman, who liveth but a short time: be not given to much speaking."(5) Let our praise be in God, and not of ourselves; for God hateth those that commend themselves. Let testimony to our good deeds be borne by others, as it was in the case of our righteous forefathers. Boldness, and arrogance, and audacity belong to those that are accursed of God; but moderation, humility, and meekness to such as are blessed by Him.

Ignatius

Do ye beloved, be careful to be subject to the bishop, and the presbyters and the deacons. For he that is subject to these is obedient to Christ, who has appointed them; but he that he is disobedient to these is disobedient to Christ Jesus. And "he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."(ANF, vol. 1, p. 51)

Seeing then, all things have an end, there is set before us life upon our observance of God's precepts, but death as the result of disobedience, and every one, according to the choice he makes, shall go to his own place, let us flee from death, and make choice of life. The truly devout man is the right kind of coin, stamped by God himself. The ungodly man, again, is false coin, unlawful, spurious, counterfeit, wrought not by God, but by the devil. I do not mean to say that there are two different human natures, but that there is one humanity, sometimes belonging to God, and sometimes to the devil. If any one is truly religious, he is a man of God; but if he is irreligious, he is a man of the devil, made such, not by nature, but by his own choice. The unbelieving bear the image of the prince of wickedness. The believing possess the image of their Prince, God the Father, and Jesus Christ, through whom, if we are not in readiness to die for the truth into his passion, his life is not in us. (ANF, vol. 1, p. 61)

Justin Martyr

And we have learned that those only are deified who have lived near to God in holiness and virtue; and we believe that those who live wickedly and do not repent are punished in everlasting fire. (ANF, vol. 1, p. 170)

Each man goes to everlasting punishment or salvation according to the value of his actions. For if all men knew this, no one would choose wickedness even for a little, knowing that he goes to the everlasting punishment of fire. but would by all means restrain himself and adorn himself with virtue, that he might obtain the good gifts of God, and escape the punishments(ANF, vol. 1, p. 166). The First Apology of Justin - chapter 16 For not those who make profession, but those who do the works, shall be saved, according to his word: "not everyone who saith to me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. By their works ye shall know them and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast in to the fire. (Mt. 7:17-21)" (ANF, vol. 1, p. 177)

Cyprian

The Lord denounces, and says, 'Many shall say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, and in Your name have cast out devils, and in Your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity'. There is need of righteousness, that one may deserve well of God

of the Judge; we must obey His precepts and warnings, that our merits may receive their reward (ANF, vol. 5, p. 426).

Origen

The Saviour also saying, "I say unto you, Resist not evil;" and, "Whoever shall be angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment;" and, "Whosoever shall look upon a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart;" and in issuing certain other commands,--conveys no other meaning than this, that it is in our own power to observe what is commanded. And therefore we are rightly rendered liable to condemnation if we transgress those commandments which we are able to keep. And hence He Himself also declares: "Every one who hears my words, and doeth them, I will show to whom he is like: he is like a wise man who built his house upon a rock," etc. So also the declaration: "Whoso heareth these things, and doeth them not, is like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand," etc. Even the words addressed to those who are on His right hand, "Come unto Me, all ye blessed of My Father," etc.; "for I was an hungred, and ye gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink," manifestly show that it depended upon themselves, that either these should be deserving of praise for doing what was commanded and receiving what was promised, or those deserving of censure who either heard or received the contrary, and to whom it was said, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire (Mt. 25:34, etc.)" Let us observe also, that the Apostle Paul addresses us as having power over our own will, and as possessing in ourselves the causes either of our salvation or of our ruin: "Dost thou despise the riches of His goodness, and of His patience, and of His long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But, according to thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou art treasuring up for thyself wrath on the day of judgment and of the revelation of the just judgment of God, who will render to every one according to his work: to those who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and immortality, eternal life; while to those who are contentious, and believe not the truth, but who believe iniquity, anger, indignation, tribulation, and distress, on every soul of man that worketh evil, on the Jew first, and (afterwards) on the Greek; but glory, and honour, and peace to every one that doeth good, to the Jew first, and (afterwards) to the Greek." You will find also innumerable other passages in holy Scripture, which manifestly show that we possess freedom of will. Otherwise there would be a contrariety in commandments being given us, by observing which we may be saved, or by transgressing which we may be condemned, if the power of keeping them were not implanted in us (ANF, Vol. 4, p. 306).

Whether it is possible for the apostle to contradict himself? And if this cannot be imagined of an apostle, how shall he appear, according to them, to be just in blaming those who committed fornication in Corinth, or those who sinned, and did not repent of their unchastity, and fornication, and uncleanness, which they had committed? How, also, does he greatly praise those who acted rightly, like the house of Onesiphorus, saying, "The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he had come to Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day." Now it is not consistent with apostolic gravity to blame him who is worthy of blame, i.e., who has sinned, and greatly to praise him who is deserving of praise for his good works; and again, as if it were in no one's power to do any good or evil, to say that it was the Creator's doing that every one should act virtuously or wickedly, seeing He makes one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour. And how can he add that statement, "We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one of us may receive in his body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad?" For what reward of good will be conferred on him who could not commit evil, being formed by the Creator to that very end? or what punishment will deservedly be inflicted on him who was unable to do good in consequence of the creative act of his Maker? Then, again, how is not this opposed to that other declaration elsewhere, that "in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work." He, accordingly, who purges himself, is made a vessel unto honour, while he who has disdained to cleanse himself from his impurity is made a vessel unto dishonour. From such declarations, in my opinion, the cause of our actions can in no degree be referred to the Creator. For God the Creator makes a certain vessel unto honour, and other vessels to dishonour; but that vessel which has cleansed itself from all impurity He makes a vessel unto honour, while that which has stained itself with the filth of vice He makes a vessel unto dishonour. The conclusion from which, accordingly, is this, that the cause of each one's actions is a pre-existing one; and then every one, according to his deserts, is made by God either a vessel unto honour or dishonour. Therefore every individual vessel has furnished to its Creator out of itself the causes and occasions of its being formed by Him to be either a vessel unto honour or one unto dishonour (ANF, Vol. 4, p. 324).

**Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2009/1/31 8:59**

I'll just be brief, read John 6:37. There is your church father quote. Also, I would ask anyone to please explain how Jesus was a complete failure at fulfilling the Father's will that he should lose none of those given to him by the Father. Away with such blasphemous ideas.

**Re: - posted by wayneman (), on: 2009/1/31 9:31**

Quote:  
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ccchhrrriiiss wrote:  
Hi Wayne...  
Quote:  
-----The doctrine that Christians can lose their salvation is based on three Scriptures:  
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Two things: First, I wouldn't call this a "doctrine." It is certainly a set of beliefs held by some, but I would hardly call it an conclusive or decisive belief. Secondly, I wouldn't say that this notion is simply based upon THREE verses. I am persuaded that a person can run ahead (and away) from their faith in Christ (by falling back in love with this world)...but it isn't based upon the three verses that you quoted.  
  
:-(  
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Hi Chris,

Doctrine means "teaching," so it's fair to say the teaching that a believer can become reprobate qualifies as a doctrine. It's also fair to say that the doctrine of reprobation is based on these three passages, but that's not to suggest that proponents of this doctrine are simply isolating and stringing verses together out of context to support their position. On the contrary, these passages seem to state explicitly that it is possible to lose one's salvation. The bottom line is "no man can come to me except my Father in heaven draws him." If we have once walked with God, then backslid, then return to Christ in repentance, it is the Father who has drawn us back, and "he who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out." Backsliders who seek repentance don't need to fear that the Lord will slam the door in their faces (take it from one who knows!).

I am of the opinion (and this is liable to any amount of correction) that Perseverance vs. Reprobation is, like Election vs. Freewill, a paradox that we'll never fully understand this side of eternity.

**Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2009/1/31 12:04**

Quote:  
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TaylorOtwell wrote:  
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Dear brother ,

I personally believe he can not lose anyone who dont want to be lost, I do believe one can leave Christ for love of the world, love for sin or self more then they want Christ after they have been converted, putting back on the old man.

Indeed your passage of scripture speaks great comfort for such people who want to be saved and its clear. But Christ also said much other things and lets have the entirety of scripture in our minds.

Joh 15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.  
Joh 15:2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that

t it may bring forth more fruit.

Joh 15:3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Joh 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

Joh 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Joh 15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

the word IF in verse 6 is very important one, seeing one can abide in Christ, and IF someone stops that they will be cast into the fire.

Let us see what Christ said in all the gospels, indeed he said many other things that can give great comfort to a believer in that no one, not even satan himself can take away anything from us, unless we allow him to do so.

I would not go so far as calling it blasphemy, then the same could be said to those who hold to eternal security based on many other verses in scripture.

**Re: - posted by HomeFree89 (), on: 2009/1/31 12:28**

Quote:

-----Away with such blasphemous ideas.  
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Brother,

I would ask you, in the name of Christ, not to say such things. It truly grieves my spirit. There is no need for saying that other true Christians' beliefs are blasphemous. I know you feel very strongly that Calvinism is truth, but there are those who disagree and are still apart of orthodox Christianity. :-)

**Re: - posted by graceamazed (), on: 2009/1/31 14:44**

Quote:

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I agree. I do not believe this great debate will ever be resolved this side of eternity and in the end I think we'll find that the Lord was neither fully Calvinist nor Arminian. There have been too many great men of God in both camps for me to fully reject one in favor of the other (though I do definitely hold closer to one systematic understanding than the other).

**Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiisss (), on: 2009/1/31 15:08**

Hi wayneman...

Quote:

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Doctrine means "teaching," so it's fair to say the teaching that a believer can become reprobate qualifies as a doctrine. It's also fair to say that the doctrine of reprobation is based on these three passages, but that's not to suggest that proponents of this doctrine are simply isolating and stringing verses together out of context to support their position. On the contrary, these passages seem to state explicitly that it is possible to lose one's salvation. The bottom line is "no man can come to me except my Father in heaven draws him." If we have once walked with God, then backslid, then return to Christ in repentance, it is the Father who has drawn us back, and "he who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out." Backsliders who seek repentance don't need

d to fear that the Lord will slam the door in their faces (take it from one who knows!).

I am of the opinion (and this is liable to any amount of correction) that Perseverance vs. Reprobation is, like Election vs. Freewill, a paradox that we'll never fully understand this side of eternity.

When I said that I don't think that this was a "doctrine," I meant that I don't see it being TAUGHT by anyone in the early church. The apostles did not teach something that was not completely set in stone by the Scriptures (pure truth) – except for the anecdote of Peter and the circumcision. Can we say with any certainty that the early Church preached ONE idea over the other (in regards to "eternal security")? Do we see them teach *both*?

I certainly agree with the essence of what you're saying in your post. This issue is FAR from established as an "undeniable truth" in the Scriptures. While some point to a few verses that lead them to believe one way or the other, there is no definitive reference that leads us to believe that the matter is certainly established. However, we have (and know) the Scriptures as a whole.

Can someone who has truly called upon...and followed after...the Lord in truth – can such a person be tempted to turn back to their old life? I believe that the answer is YES. Why? The Scriptures warn believers about either returning to...or running ahead of...the things of this world. In addition, I think that we can state with certainty that we are all TEMPTED by the things of this world. What happens if we were to give in to those temptations...and continually walk into those things? Are we so brave as to claim that we are still followers of Christ when we are actually following after the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life?

That being said: I don't think that it is wise for a believer to go about preaching with any sort of certainty one way or the other. Why? Most of the time, this ends up becoming the teaching of a man...and an extra biblical "doctrine." Why can't we just say what the Scriptures say regarding the matter...and leave it at that?

Instead, we find churches that draw up their own doctrinal views and include them within the "we believe" section of their denomination or local congregation...restricting active participation within the congregation to those who wholeheartedly profess an appreciation for such beliefs. This isn't just true of matters regarding the concept of "eternal security," but of many other issues too. Doctrines are embraced, propagated and taught in a way as to "indoctrinate" believers toward a particular perspective...rather than to allow a believer to make up his/her mind through much prayer and study.

Rather than teaching a doctrine that says we can be secure in our salvation no matter what (even, perhaps, while living in sin), can't we simply warn believers about walking away from or running ahead of the faith? I have met people living in gross, blatant and unrepentant sin – yet lay claim to a "doctrine" that says that they are saved. They claim that their faith in Christ was real...so they can't lose it...even if they have returned to walking in the sins of this world. I just think that this is just counterproductive to the teachings of Christ in the New Testament.

:-)

**Re: - posted by bible4life (), on: 2009/1/31 15:18**

thank you for all of your responses, thanks for quotes for the church fathers too.

**Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2009/2/1 7:53**

My intent for posting the quotes and participate here is not to flame up another cal vs arm discussion, the original poster asked a question and i tried to give him answers and some of my very little wisdom concerning seeking answers and some of the dangers i myself have encountered. I think i even pointed out if he wanted to read good writings that hold the opposite view. Some that i have been blessed by are Edwards, Spurgeon, Withfield ect.

But also id like to mention there are difference between calvinist and calvinist, see i have been very blessed by both Matthew Henry and J.C Ryles commentary's on scripture, and as far as i can understand their beliefs would be placed under reformed and calvinist. And the very interesting thing and the thing i believe to be one of the reason God so has horned them with the light they had and that is seen in their writings is when they come to a very "arminian" passage of scripture they dont explain it away but are very true to what is written, unlike many others they are faithful to scripture. I read in ryles commentary some things that would make some call him a blasphemer since he has inserted some things that i thin

k is very close to a believer losing his salvation, in passages that speak about discipleship and the cost of following Christ and the consequence of not taking it serious, and i have found the same in Matthew Henrys commentary. So it is not so much that we hold fast to one doctrine and we will hold it so no one could even bend it out from our cold dead hands.

Either we say i dont know how it fits together as of yet, and both Ryle and Henry i think had this humility to treat scripture with sincerity fear and honesty.

Indeed this goes both ways since many arminians do the very same thing. But i hope we can all accept that no doctrine or system is perfect and can fully explain all mysteries in scripture.

And arminians have just as many bible verses and passages that are difficult for them to explain that calvinistic have. In this i find Henry and Ryle examples to follow in how they honestly treated scripture in so much they could insert something in their commentary upon the Holy Scriptures that went against the "rules" of the doctrine they held.

To the original posters question, i here post some more quotes from the early church on this topic, and i refer to my first posts warnings once again.

Let us therefore repent with the whole heart, so that none of us perish by the way.

second clement c.150

if you do not guard yourself against anger you and your house will lose all hope of salvation

Hermas c.150

I hold further, that those of you who have confessed and known this man to be Christ, yet who have gone back for some reason to the legal dispensation, and have denied that this man is Christ, and have not repented before death - you will by no means be saved

Justin Martyr c.160

Those who do not obey Him, being disinherited by Him, have ceased to be His sons.

Irenaeus c.180

The world returned to sin...and so it is destined to fire. So is the man who after baptism renews his sins.

Tertullian c.197

Being a believing man, if you seek to live as the gentiles do, the joys of the world remove you from the grace of Christ

Commodianus c.240

these are just a few, these are from Bercots dictionary of early christian beliefs.

It is a must have in the christian library and you can find it for less than 20 dollars. In it you will find quotes and the early church fathers writings on nearly every subject that pertains to christianity. It is not scripture but a very interesting book that will show us what the first generations of christians believed, Christians that spoke greek, read scripture in greek and lived in the same time period as Christ.

No doubt a very challenging and interesting book to glean from. But without the spirit showing us from scripture it is worth nothing i say again.

God bless

Re: - posted by Lysa (), on: 2009/2/1 8:08

Quote:

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TaylorOtwell wrote:

I'll just be brief, read John 6:37. There is your church father quote. Also, I would ask anyone to please explain how Jesus was a complete failure at fulfilling the Father's will that he should lose none of those given to him by the Father. Away with such blasphemous ideas.

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Blasphemous ideas? :-D

Read Luke 10, when Christ sent out the seventy two by two. Judas was in that bunch was he not?

Did Jesus not speak to Judas as well as the others, "*behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.*" (Luke 10.19-20)

Jesus withheld nothing from him that he gave the others. He had been given the power to tread on scorpions and the spirits had been subject unto him and yet he betrayed Jesus. {edit: it may not seem so to you, but it seems clear to me.

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2009/2/1 10:31

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But also id like to mention there are difference between calvinist and calvinist, see i have been very blessed by both Matthew Henry and J.C Ryles commentary's on scripture, and as far as i can understand their beliefs would be placed under reformed and calvinist. And the very interesting thing and the thing i believe to be one of the reasons God so has honored them with the light they had and that is seen in their writings is when they come to a very "arminian" passage of scripture they dont explain it away but are very true to what is written, unlike many others they are faithful to scripture. I read in ryles commentary some things that would make some call him a blasphemer since he has inserted some things that i think is very close to a believer losing his salvation, in passages that speak about discipleship and the cost of following Christ and the consequence of not taking it serious, and i have found the same in Matthew Henry's commentary. So it is not so much that we hold fast to one doctrine and we will hold it so no one could even bend it out from our cold dead hands.

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Either we say i dont know how it fits together as of yet, and both Ryle and Henry i think had this humility to treat scripture with sincerity fear and honesty.

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Very good post brother hmmhmm. I'm glad to see you recognize that there is indeed a Calvinism that is accepting to the mysteries of God. C.H. Spurgeon often mentioned the fact that he didn't know exactly how it all worked out in regards to God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. I believe this acceptance and willingness to admit that we don't have it all figured out is why so many Calvinists admire the writings of A.W. Tozer. He held a very high view of the sovereignty of God but never denied the responsibility of the believer.

Another point to remember is that 'once saved always saved' means different things to different people. If you ask me if I believe in OSAS I would ask you what you mean by it. Only after hearing your explanation would I be able to agree with you or not. I do not believe it as explained by several people I know. As a matter of fact, I have met very few people in person that I agree with on the subject. I disagree with the majority of its modern day explanations, as cchhhrrriiss pointed out, it is often taught in a way as to promote sinful and un-Godly behavior. This is where the old teachings of perseverance of the saints, that was taught by the authors, preachers, and teacher of old (like the ones hmmhmm mentioned), and the modern teachings of OSAS clash. An in depth study will reveal there to be more of a difference than is often

realized.

As for responding to the original thread question:

There are many websites and people dedicated to dealing with the issue of eternal security. Many websites and authors believe in it...many do not. It is not uncommon for someone to publish a book of cherry picked statements claiming to end the debate once and for all. There are hundreds of books claiming the early fathers believed this or did not believe that. They were facing countless heresies and forming their own understandings. The doctrine of the trinity had also not been fully developed and articulated at this time.

**Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2009/2/1 11:07**

Being stripped of their context it is difficult to judge the original usage of these quotes. Most appealed to me as warnings against apostasy, which is the failure to "make one's calling and election sure."

For instance,

"The world returned to sin...and so it is destined to fire. So is the man who after baptism renews his sins."

I agree, a man who goes entirely back to the world after baptism should expect damnation for trusting in his baptism, rather than Christ for his salvation. He was never saved.

"Those who do not obey Him, being disinherited by Him, have ceased to be His sons."

This is patent contradiction to Hebrews 12:6-8, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." Clearly, if you do not receive and endure God's corrective disciplines, then you WERE NEVER a son. You are yet a bastard son of the devil, and no son of God.

"If you do not guard yourself against anger you and your house will lose all hope of salvation."

Am I to believe that my family's salvation now relies on my temper, rather than on God's covenant with them as individuals in Christ!! But we could take it another way, to say that if we continue on in rage then we shall lose hope that we ever experience regeneration and sanctification which belong to every person born again.

Let's remember that the "fathers" were basing their ideas off of scripture just like us, and we have more of it than most of them did. Also, we know the canon, and they pulled from mixed sources.

**Re: - posted by hmmhmm (), on: 2009/2/1 11:55**

I agree quoting can take something completely out of context, the best thing is to read the early church writings for oneself to get a view of the whole content and so on. Purpose and to whom it is written and so on.

And again it is possible to take quotes out as previous posters have mentioned and make it into something extreme or cult.

I have seen the watchtower quote early church fathers, seen Catholics quote them to show their heretical doctrines to be the "true" ones, an example is I saw a Catholic take a quote and make it so that our salvation hangs on the obedience to the pope and the church.

So it is a danger in doing so, I just posted short quotes that deal somewhat with the issue at hand.

But when one read the early church fathers i think many of them believed it was possible to know Christ in truth and go back.

Right or wrong their writing is not scripture, but from many of them that is what i get when reading them.

But I have been wrong once or twice before :-)

**Re: - posted by TaylorOtwell (), on: 2009/2/1 15:21**

Lysa,

Judas was never a believer. He was the son of perdition destined to betray the Christ as prophesied in the Old Testament. Jesus said "yet one of your is a devil..." (John 6:70)

And, yes, it is a blasphemous idea to say that, although Christ said it was the Father's will that he lose **none** of those given to Him by the Father, He actually failed in this task.

With care in Christ,  
Taylor

**Re: - posted by bible4life (), on: 2009/2/1 22:38**

Open for life thank you for those powerful insights. Hmm i agree it is just their thoughts and not scripture and it looks from what i see that they believed you could lose salvation. Taylor i agree completely with what your saying about judas, he was a devil the wholetime, he was a goat with the sheep.

**Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2009/2/1 22:41**

I think many people operate theologically on the principle, "better safe than sorry." Not entirely sure of the issue, these wisely steer far and clear of paths that tend towards apostasy. Meanwhile, such individuals also commonly maintain that, for themselves, if ever they are to be saved it will be by the sheer grace of God and not some personal determination originating in themselves. If asked, "did God save you decisively because you obeyed more and were more faithful than the one who apostatized?" they would retort, "No! He saved me for Christ's sake, by His grace!"

I am convinced that this group has simply not seen the promises which are granted in scripture to those who have truly believed on Christ: that they have already received forgiveness for all sins, past and future, and will also receive supplies of the Spirit which will make them willing to grow in faith and holiness for the rest of their lives."

Titus 3:5-7 "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

If you have been regenerated, then you are justified of all sins. Furthermore, you are heirs, not bastards, and your adoption was determined from before the foundation of the world.

Eph. 1:4-8

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

Eph 2:8 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

It is grace that determined salvation; it is grace that provided the gift of faith through which salvation is received; it shall be grace by which one is saved. It is never by works decisively our own, therefore no truly regenerate person shall be lost

What does this mean for us? Have faith in Christ and make your calling and election sure, even working it out with fear and trembling lest we should discover in the end that we have trusted in our future obedience and not in future grace to m

ake us willing.

Jer. 32:40 "I will make an **everlasting** covenant with them, that I **will not** turn away from them, to do them good; but **I will put my fear in their hearts**, that they **shall not depart from me.**"

God is sovereign over the nature of creatures, and it is out of this nature that the will determines actions.

Blessings.