

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Pronouncing Somone to be saved

Pronouncing Somone to be saved - posted by Laviver, on: 2009/8/23 1:31

I have heard various preachers come out hard against pronouncing someone to be saved, and I heartily agree with them. I believe that it is God's place to write names into His Book of Life and it will be Him who judges on Judgment Day.

My question comes in with a passage like 2 Cor. 5:18-20. What exactly is the ministry of reconciliation described here? This question I've had for a while and am just now asking.

Also I just finished a read-through of the gospel of John. In chapter 20 verse 23, the Lord says, "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Does this factor in with the Corinthian passage? Is there some sort of biblical doctrine or precedence calling for believers (responsible, in tune with the Holy Spirit, sensing His presence and power of conviction and leading into truth, etc) to be able to forgive sins/reconcile people unto God and declare them "saved" or some other salvific type word?

Re: Pronouncing Somone to be saved - posted by RobertW (), on: 2009/8/23 5:06

Quote:
-----My question comes in with a passage like 2 Cor. 5:18-20. What exactly is the ministry of reconciliation described here? This question I've had for a while and am just now asking.

The whole of the bible is about relationships; especially God's relationship with man. Covenants are about relationships. The New Covenant would set forth a whole new level of relationship between God and man so that God would literally come and dwell in man and would commune with man at a whole new level. Men would literally become living stones in the Temple of the Holy Spirit; that is, their bodies the Temple of the Holy Ghost.

Because of what Christ has done on the cross men can come into a relationship via the New Covenant that no one in times past could have experienced. This is why a proper understanding of the New Covenant is critical. They who preach the Gospel are beseeching folk to take advantage of God's offer to be reconciled unto man as the barriers of full fellowship have been removed (sins and Sin). The veil has been torn in two. We can come boldly unto the throne of grace. This is not a dead religion- it is Life. It is the opportunity for the Holy Spirit to come in cleanse our temple (as it were) and take up the throne of our hearts in a genuine residence. This is what separates Christians from all other people on earth. They have begun in the Spirit (Galatians 3:3) by having been baptized into Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. This enables them to yield the fruit of the Spirit that is impossible to yield by a simple attempted obedience to a commandment. Men do by nature the things that are written in God's word because God is now working in them to will and to do His good pleasure. But the key is to understand that this is not just a theology but a reality that comes with the experience of genuine *regeneration*.

Re: Pronouncing Somone to be saved - posted by RobertW (), on: 2009/8/23 5:51

Hi Laviver,

Quote:
-----I have heard various preachers come out hard against pronouncing someone to be saved, and I heartily agree with them. I believe that it is God's place to write names into His Book of Life and it will be Him who judges on Judgment Day.

The term used pre early 1900 for describing a person that had come to Christ was typically 'hopefully converted.' This is a phrase that denotes caution towards a person that may have seemed to have come to Christ. You may find interesting two articles I have compiled that deal specifically with your question. You may wish to take a look specifically of the image at the bottom of the second link that is a graphical chart of the use of the term 'hopefully converted' in newspapers from

m the 1700's to today. Very telling, I think.

(<http://www.theocraticfaith.com/articles/evangelism/list/117-the-betrayal-of-the-ages-part-4>) The End of Hopeful Conversions

(<http://realrevival.blogspot.com/2009/07/none-now-live-that-remember-part-2.html>) Billy Sunday and 'Sundayism' brings to an end term 'Hopeful Conversions.'

Re: Pronouncing Somone to be saved - posted by twayneb (), on: 2009/8/23 9:11

Quote:
-----My question comes in with a passage like 2 Cor. 5:18-20. What exactly is the ministry of reconciliation described here? This question I've had for a while and am just now asking.

Here is a scripture that I think might shed some more light on the question. Romans 10:14. It is not that we have the ability to bring about reconciliation. We have the charge to tell others about reconciliation and bring them to the one to which they must be reconciled. He is the one who does the work.

As to John 20:23, I cannot say that I have ever come to a totally satisfactory understanding of this scripture myself. There is a similarity in my own mind between this scripture and Paul speaking of turning a person over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh in the context of church discipline in 1 Cor. 5:5. I am not at all dogmatic on this point because I am not sure, but is it possible that we have the ability to "pray off" the consequences of sin as we are praying for someone to come into right relationship with God. Something like we as a body removing our own "hedge of protection" around a person and allowing their sins to be fully retained unto themselves as far as the physical consequences of sin are concerned. ??? I am not totally sure, but it is the only interpretation that has made a lot of sense to me so far. I would say this one is still on my "list of scriptures before the Lord asking Him to reveal to me what it means".

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2009/8/23 9:26

Quote:
-----here is a similarity in my own mind between this scripture and Paul speaking of turning a person over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh in the context of church discipline in 1 Cor. 5:5.

I think the important thing here is to realize that at Corinth the Holy Spirit was manifest in their gatherings in such a way that they were moving in harmony with Him. You will note the language in Acts 15:

For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; (Acts 15:28)

There was a point in this discussion when the group began to discern and articulate what was the mind of the Spirit. This often happens when men and women gather together in the name of the Lord. Notice, again how 1 Cor 5 describes the event:

In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are gathered together (and I am there in spirit), and the power of our Lord Jesus is there, too, (1 Cor. 5:4-5) ISV

This is not an authority that is given to men but is a function of God's grace that comes upon the people at the point of need. So they could not just be walking around doing this or that, but were wholly dependent on the Holy Spirit to enable them to perform what He is telling them to do. This means that even in situation where someone must be dealt with it is important that we wait on God until He gives the revelation and utterance in order that the action might be of grace to the intent of performing God's will in the love of God and not in the wrath of man. This is why such things are to be handled only by they that are spiritual (Galatians 6:1). The person(s) functioning on behalf of God must be totally under his control and enabled by His Spirit.

Re: , on: 2009/8/23 17:39

Hi Robert, have a question. If we, the believers, are literally the temple of the Holy Ghost, each a stone in this temple, and I agree that we are, the temple that will be desecrated in the last days, why say those who believe, that it will be a physical temple in Israel?.....Frank

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2009/8/23 22:25

Quote:

-----...why say those who believe, that it will be a physical temple in Israel?.

I think it is because they take a certain eschatological approach to prophecy that predisposes them to think that. I have often wondered when Jesus told of not one stone being left on another (referring to Herod's Temple) that He may have been referring to the Church that existed on earth during the end times. That not 'one stone would be left on another' being symbolic of utter persecution. But really I think we just need to be ready for whatever happens. The non-believing Jews were really messed up on their concepts of Christ's first coming- may we not make the same 'types' of mistakes by being overly dogmatic about things which we are seeing through a dark glass. I don't think we can say anything with too much certainty, so we should prepare for the worst.

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2009/8/24 0:17

Gaebelein's Annotated Bible
2 Kings 11:1

3. Athaliah and Jehoiada's Revival

CHAPTER 11

1. Athaliah's wicked reign (11:1-3; 2Ch 22:10-12)
2. Joash (Jehoash) proclaimed king (11:4-12; 2Ch 23:1-11)
3. The death of Athaliah (11:13-16; 2Ch 23:12-15)
4. Jehoiada's revival (11:17-21; 2Ch 23:16-21)

Athaliah, the wicked daughter of a wicked pair (Ahab and Jezebel), the widow of Joram, King of Judah, Jehoshaphat's son and the mother of Ahaziah, who had been slain by Jehu, destroyed the seed royal. She did so because she wanted the authority herself. It was an awful deed, inspired by him who is the murderer from the beginning. And Satan aimed through her at something of which his instrument was ignorant. It was one of the many attempts Satan made to exterminate the male offspring to make the coming One, the promised saviour, the seed of the woman, impossible. Had he succeeded through Athaliah in the destruction of the royal seed of David, the promise made to David would have become impossible. Notice the first little word in the second verse, "But." Satan's attempt failed. The watchful eye of Jehovah and His power frustrated it all. A wicked woman killed her own children and a godly woman was used to keep one of the royal seed alive.

Jehosheba ("the LORD's oath" is the meaning of her name), through whom the covenant-oath was sustained, was the wife of Jehoiada (meaning "the LORD knows"), the high-priest (2Ch 22:11); he was brother-in-law to Ahaziah (2Ch 22:11) and Jehosheba was probably a half sister of Ahaziah. She took the young child from among the King's sons and hid him first in the bed-chamber and then in the house of the LORD till the seventh year. Well may we see here a most beautiful type of our Lord Jesus Christ. Like Joash He was doomed to death, yea, He died. But He was raised from the dead and is now hidden in the house of God above, the heavens having received Him. Joash, the heir of the throne of David, was hidden till the seventh year even as the true heir to the throne of David is now hidden in the presence of God till the six years (six the number of man's day, the present age) are passed. And when the seventh year comes--the beginning of the coming age, He will be brought forth as Joash was brought from his hiding place and be crowned king.

A remnant selected by Jehoiada saw the king first. It is a great scene this chapter describes. The company brought together, armed with King David's shields and spears, the king's son brought into the midst, Jehoiada putting the crown upon

his head, anointing him with oil, they clapped with their hands and shouted "God save the King." Greater will be the scene when He will be crowned King of Kings, whose right it is to reign. Athaliah, the usurper, appears on the scene, attracted by the noise. She is face to face with the crowned king and receives now her well-deserved punishment outside of the house of the LORD. A great revival followed. A covenant was made by Jehoiada between the LORD and the king and people "that they should be the LORD's people." Baal's altars and images are broken. The king sits upon his throne. All the people of the land rejoiced and there was peace. All these blessed results are faint foreshadowings of what is yet to be when the usurper is cast out, when the true King is crowned. Then Israel will be in truth the LORD's people, idolatry will cease, the land and the people will rejoice and the city be quiet.end:

We must separate the heavenly from the earthly.

Christ is King of all Kings. He will be Israel's earthly King on David's throne and He is our heavenly King, for that is where we are already seated with Him, in heavenly places, which is while we are on this earth a realm of living, for we are in this world, not of this world.

Is the tribulation on earth? Where will Satan rule from, proclaiming himself to be God. Where will Christ rule for 1000 years, earthly or heavenly. The throne of David will be an earthly throne. This is Israel. The Church the Body of Christ whose kingdom is heavenly are and will be seated with Christ in this Heavenly Kingdom, which is not of this world.

Is Christ birthed or created. Are we rebirthed or recreated. Created is earthly, born again from above is heavenly. Is the whole of Israel as a nation born again, or have they been set aside until Christ sets on David's throne?

In Christ: Phillip

Re: Pronouncing Somone to be saved, on: 2009/8/24 1:07

Quote:
-----by Laviver on 2009/8/22 19:31:43 I have heard various preachers come out hard against pronouncing someone to be saved, and I heartily agree with them. I believe that it is God's place to write names into His Book of Life and it will be Him who judges on Judgment Day. My question comes in with a passage like 2 Cor. 5:18-20. What exactly is the ministry of reconciliation described here? This question I've had for a while and am just now asking. Also I just finished a read-through of the gospel of John. In chapter 20 verse 23, the Lord says, "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Does this factor in with the Corinthian passage? Is there some sort of biblical doctrine or precedence calling for believers (responsible, in tune with the Holy Spirit, sensing His presence and power of conviction and leading into truth, etc) to be able to forgive sins/reconcile people unto God and declare them "saved" or some other salvific type word?

Ah...some of the Catholic verses Protestants read and go "does not compute". lol

If You Forgive Sins, They Are Forgiven

First, Jesus did give the power to forgive sins to human beings. In John 20:21-23, Jesus says, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." Then he breathed on them, saying, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." This is the bedrock on which the sacrament of confession stands or falls.

The meaning of this passage is clear to Catholics: Jesus, who alone has the power to forgive or retain sins (Mark 2:10; Luke 5:24), transmits that power to the apostles. But Evangelicals usually have a different take on John 20:21-23. One of the most popular is that Jesus sent the apostles to preach the gospel and to inform hearers that if they have faith in him their sins are forgiven, and if they do not believe in him their sins are retained. This "preaching only" interpretation comes from reading John 20:21-23 in light of 1 Timothy 2:5, in which Paul says that Jesus is the one and only mediator between God and us. Because Evangelicals approach the text believing that Jesus could not have really given the apostles this power, they conclude that he instead commissioned them to preach about the forgiveness and retention of sins. The Evangelical then draws a parallel between John 20 and the "Great Commission" texts, as they are referred to by many Protestants, where Jesus commanded the apostles to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15; cf. Matt. 28:18-20, Luke 24:47). John was saying the same thing but using different words. To the Evangelical

angelical mind, John is saying, "Whoever believes the gospel, you can declare their sins to have already been forgiven through the preaching of the cross." Of course, that is not what the text says. Jesus clearly commissioned the apostles to carry out his ministry of reconciliation as his agents.

Priests Act "In Persona Christi"

But Paul teaches that Jesus is the one and only mediator between God and us (1 Tim. 2:5), so isn't the priest an unnecessary intermediary? Shouldn't Christians confess their sins directly to God?

Catholics do confess their sins directly to God both within and outside the confessional. Jesus advocated praying directly to the Father to ask forgiveness for our sins (Matt. 6:12), and Catholics do this communally at every Mass and in prayer groups, and individually during private prayer. But Catholics also believe that Jesus gave the Church a unique role in his ministry of reconciliation by entrusting it with his power to forgive and retain sins. It is useful to clarify what happens in the sacrament of confession. During confession, the priest perpetuates this ministry by acting in persona Christi, "in the person of Christ." In other words, when Catholics receive absolution from the priest for sins confessed, it is Jesus' forgiveness that is granted, not the priest's.

An essential principle of the ministerial priesthood is that God works through men who have a special spiritual role within the Church to communicate his grace and truth. Both Catholics and Evangelicals affirm Paul's teaching that Jesus is the sole mediator between God and us, but Catholics recognize that Jesus was at liberty to allow his mediation to be worked through the apostles and their successors in the Church.

We see Jesus giving specific power to the apostles to perpetuate his presence and ministry not only in John 20:21–23 but also in other Gospel accounts: Jesus confers his authority to baptize, saying, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:18–19); he also gives Peter and the apostles the power to teach and to excommunicate within the Church in a way that would be ratified in heaven (Matt. 16:18; 18:19).

Jesus chose to use the apostles as his instruments. Most Evangelicals will agree that this instrumentality is at work in their own pastors, who perform baptisms in their churches. In a similar way, God employs priests as ministers of forgiveness in the sacrament of confession.

By Our Love They Will Know Us

At the heart of the Evangelical tradition is the doctrine of justification by faith alone (sola fide), which says that once we accept Jesus as our personal savior in faith, we are clothed with his righteousness and forever righteous in his eyes. Because we are justified entirely by God's grace, which we accept through faith, our past, present, or future sins have no bearing on our standing before him. Scriptural passages that Evangelicals use to support this belief include Paul's references to justification by faith apart from the law in Romans 3:21–23 and 10:4.

Catholics and Protestants believe that we are justified by God's grace through faith but differ on what that actually means. Evangelicals usually understand justification as a one-time historical event, but Catholics see it as a dynamic process of conversion that includes the forgiveness of sins and the interior renewal of the person (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2018). By our faith in Jesus and the unmerited grace that we receive in baptism, God comes to dwell within us. In doing so, God does not simply declare us righteous. He arms us with the power of his Holy Spirit to become truly righteous and reflect his love to the world.

The faith that justifies us, according to Catholic doctrine, is alive and expressed through love (Gal. 5:6), not just intellectual belief or personal trust. In Romans 3:21–23 and 10:4, which Catholics interpret differently than Evangelicals, Paul teaches that Jesus ushered in a new mode of justification—apart from the Mosaic law but not apart from good deeds, which James tells us are essential for justification (Jas. 2:24–26). In fact, Jesus says he will measure our righteousness by how well we have put our faith to work in acts of love for our neighbor (Matt. 25:37–40).

Unlike Evangelicals, Catholics believe that after baptism we can lose the grace of justification by sinning. Jesus is clear on this point. The wheat will be gathered into the master's barn while the weeds will be burned (Matt. 13:30); the good fish will be kept while the bad ones will be thrown into the furnace (Matt. 13:47–50). Paul echoed Jesus' teaching when he warned the Galatians, who were already baptized believers, that if they commit serious sins they "shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21). He also cautioned the Romans that those who perform wicked deeds will receive "wrath

and fury" instead of eternal life (Rom. 2:7-8).

Living the Christian faith in love has always been easier said than done. Like Paul, sometimes we do evil instead of the good we want to do (Rom. 7:19). Even when we have professed our faith in Jesus and become regenerated by the Holy Spirit in baptism, at times we will separate ourselves from God by offending him. At these times, we are called to "be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).

The sacrament of confession incarnates Jesus' "ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18) so that we can walk together with God again after we have strayed away in sin. Like Evangelicals, Catholics affirm that Jesus' love unto death was entirely sufficient to redeem us, but Catholics believe that it is precisely by the power of his redemptive blood that our personal reconciliation with God is then possible.

By virtue of the new covenant in Jesus, God's mercy has been made available to us when we sincerely ask for forgiveness. Being reconciled with God means exercising our freedom to make a U-turn back to God in humility and love. Placing this process of conversion and forgiveness within the context of sacramental confession allows us to experience Jesus' redemptive power in our own lives.

In the words of Pope John Paul II:

This reconciliation with God leads, as it were, to other reconciliations, which repair the other breaches caused by sin. The forgiven penitent is reconciled with himself in his inmost being, where he regains his innermost truth. He is reconciled with his brethren whom he has in some way offended and wounded. He is reconciled with the Church. He is reconciled with all creation (Reconciliation and Penance 31, 5).

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2009/8/24 2:08

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible

John 20:23

Verse 23. Whose soever sins, &c. Cmt. on Mt 16:19 Cmt. on Mt 18:18. It is worthy of remark here that Jesus confers the same power on all the apostles. He gives to no one of them any peculiar authority. If Peter, as the Papists pretend, had been appointed to any peculiar authority, it is wonderful that the Saviour did not here hint at any such pre-eminence. This passage conclusively proves that they were invested with equal power in organizing and governing the church. The authority which he had given Peter to preach the gospel first to the Jews and the Gentiles, does not militate against this. Cmt. on Mt 16:18, Cmt. on Mt 16:19. This authority given them was full proof that they were inspired. The meaning of the passage is not that man can forgive sins--that belongs only to God (Isa 43:23), but that they should be inspired; that in founding the church, and in declaring the will of God, they should be taught by the Holy Ghost to declare on what terms, to what characters, and to what temper of mind God would extend forgiveness of sins. It was not authority to forgive individuals, but to establish in all the churches the terms and conditions on which men might be pardoned, with a promise that God would confirm all that they taught; that all might have assurance of forgiveness who would comply with those terms; and that those who did not comply should not be forgiven, but that their sins should be retained. This commission is as far as possible from the authority which the Roman Catholic claims of remitting sin and of pronouncing pardon.

{z} "Whose soever" Mt 16:19; 18:18

Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2009/8/24 11:55

Catholic, if what you have said is the true interpretation then why did the apostle John write in his first epistle that he was writing these things to the saints so that they could individually assess and know that they have eternal life. Presumably, he should rather have written "go ask your priest if you have eternal life". I say this in a comical sense but the reality is that John's statement and tests of being born again as set forth in his first epistle have no place in the system or way that the RCC does its evaluations of a person's state of grace or a pronouncement thereof.

Re: , on: 2009/8/24 18:58

Sorry...the post I had here was for the Sola Scripura thread. I apologize for the inconvenience.