

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Age of Accountability

Age of Accountability - posted by mak28, on: 2012/6/14 14:10

Sorry for the long post ahead of time but I'd like to hear some thoughts on this.

I've been listening to a number of Paris Reidhead sermons lately, the So Great A Salvation series to be exact. He repeatedly references the age of accountability.

It's brought the idea back to my mind because three months ago a man came to our ministry building broken over his 12 year old niece dying the day before. I was already engaged with two other men but one of the other guys (who has supported us from the beginning) went out and talked with him and told him she was in heaven, guaranteed because she had not reached the age of accountability. When I was told of his statement later on that evening I was bothered on many levels. One because I believe it is not my right to declare the salvation of anyone. Two, because I wasn't raised with the idea in mind nor had I heard it been taken so literally as an actually day in your life when you officially become accountable. Never the less, my buddy who was aside them during the conversation was taught the same thing as a child though he agreed with me emotionally and spiritually about the conversation and concrete statement.

I never grew up with this teaching. Can anyone give scripture to back this up? I thought it strange that after so many years (It seemed this series came much later in Reidhead's ministry considering how he speaks of his younger days as a minster) that Paris Reidhead would still reference the idea. There must be some noted scripture that says being born in sin bears no penalty till a certain point.

The only reference I could find from a notable source is one surprising to me and that is one from St. Augustine. Clearly I don't know enough of him yet. This is an excerpt from his text "Faith, Hope and Love" under the chapter Forgiveness of Sins in the Church.

"64. The angels are in concord with us even now, when our sins are forgiven. Therefore, in the order of the Creed, after the reference to "holy Church" is placed the reference to "forgiveness of sins." For it is by this that the part of the Church on earth stands; it is by this that "what was lost and is found again" is not lost again. Of course, the gift of baptism is an exception. It is an antidote given us against original sin, so that what is contracted by birth is removed by the new birth—though it also takes away actual sins as well, whether of heart, word, or deed. But except for this great remission—the beginning point of a man's renewal, in which all guilt, inherited and acquired, is washed away—the rest of life, from the age of accountability (and no matter how vigorously we progress in righteousness), is not without the need for the forgiveness of sins."

He seems to even say infant baptism wipes away sin but that I suppose is a whole other can of worms. What gets me is, given what it seems this text suggests, is that the age of accountability is potentially an over 1,600 year old traditional teaching.

Anyone who grew up with this care to explain it biblically?

Re: Age of Accountability - posted by Blayne, on: 2012/6/14 15:13

Hi! Mak28

No need to apologize for your lengthy Post; I kinna' like 'em that way 'cuz at least it's all stated and easier to decipher and understand. :)

I'm sure you've heard that different pastors and teachers seem to be more 'gifted' with insight into some scriptures while remaining rather cloudy about others. It doesn't mean anything negative ... not in the least.

In all situations as this, whoever speaks about "age of accountability" is incorrect. There is no scriptural basis for such ideas.

Mak28, we are not only speaking about young persons not hearing/understanding the Gospel of Repentance. We are also having to speak about people who lived in ancient times past who never heard the Gospel in any form. Even in our own days, there are people in far-away lands who have not had opportunity to hear about repentance/salvation. Some too

may have heard the Gospel but it was presented to them filled with errors.

So, the question can be posed simply and directly as: What happens when a person departs the earth? Does he enter heaven or hell or what?

First things first:

1. A Christian is ALREADY in heaven. The Bible clearly states about us Christians that "God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus". It's a PAST TENSE verb: RAISED. The Bible also says that we have been "Resurrected to newness of life in Christ Jesus".

When the bible says that in the latter days Jesus will come with the clouds of heaven. A cloud consists of millions of drops of water. The water is the unseen inner man of the heart; it rises up by the power of the Word of Him who is called the Sun of righteousness. In the heavenly places all the drops of water together form the cloud. As a drop of water evaporates from the sea and rises into the air, so at his regeneration man is resurrected from the Sea of Death and transplanted into the heavenly places. Once there, he begins to function in the Kingdom of God. He was re-created as a "new creature" to live there and begins to function in the Kingdom of God, (Eph 2:6).

Clouds are images of the reborn (spiritual mankind) who are birthed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. As millions of water drops high above the earth form a close unity, so the church has her position in the heavenly places. Matthew 24:30 says: "Then will appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory"; "Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, everyone who pierced him; and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen", (Rev 1:7).

Jesus returns with His church. When Jesus returns, He will be inseparably united with His people. That is why it says: "Behold, he is coming with the clouds". And that is why it becomes true that we, "have been seated in heavenly places". When at the close of time the church is changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to join the cloud, the church of all ages, it says: "And in the sight of their foes they went up".

In the invisible world the waters, the spirits, are separated. All religions on earth are from below. Only those who belong to Jesus are from above. Jesus told the religious leaders of his day: "You are from below. I am from above; you are of this world; I am not of this world", (John 8:23). At his death a child of God is unbound from the sphere of the earth after the body, but his soul and spirit, the inner, invisible man, are eternal. This inner man remains in the body of the Lord, that is in the cloud. The Son of man is united with the cloud just as, in another image, He is the head united with His body.

When someone dies not "in Christ", that is, not belonging to the faithful (saved), he remains united with the sea. For his spirit did not rise from the sea towards the clouds. His soul and spirit then disappear in the abyss, the prison. We read that at the resurrection it is the sea, not the earth, which gives up its dead: "And the sea gave up the dead in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead in them", (Rev 20:13). Sea and Hades are synonymous, while death indicates the power which governs Hades.

Hades, (the realm of the dead), contains several categories of dead:

- a) The godless whose consciences are seared and who therefore are forever connected with the evil spirits they served.
- b) Those of the Old Covenant who were not transferred to the heavenly paradise when Jesus rose from the dead, although they had served God.
- c) Those who never had the opportunity to know the true God and never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, yet did righteousness and sought for good.

John saw how the dead of all ages, except those who shared in the first resurrection and those who were transplanted into the heavenly paradise, now rise from Hades. Then it is fulfilled: "The hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment", (John 5:28-29).

Daniel said this about the second resurrection, "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt", (Dan 12:2). The verse speaks of 'many', not of 'all', for many dead were to share in the first resurrection and never see death, (John 8:51).

Towards man, the Heavenly Father is continually "merciful and gracious slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor requite us according to our iniquities", (Ps 103:8-10). The Most High is absolutely goodness and always remains consistently positive towards His creation, as it is not His will that any should perish.

The bible speaks of those who have consciously chosen the side of the Evil One, as it says for instance in John 3:19, "This is the judgment that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil". In the day of judgment these godless people will flee away from the presence of the Lord, together with the spirits they are united with. They will throw themselves into the lake of fire, in the outer darkness of the concentration of all the powers of hell.

But the Bible also speaks about the last judgment and of the "the book of life" in which are recorded the names of those who will not be thrown into the lake of fire but will share in the life that is from God. Even before the birth of Jesus this book was mentioned in the Old Testament. When Moses interceded for his disobedient people, he said, "Forgive their sin and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written", (Ex 32:32). David prayed this prayer about his wicked enemies, "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living; let them not be enrolled among the righteous", (Ps 69:28). So here we already have an indication that man is cut off by the sins he does and not by the condition he is in at the time of his birth.

The book of life therefore contains the names of those who have done deeds of righteousness. It should of course be clear that this is not the perfect righteousness as it is given by Jesus. The dead will be judged "according to what they have done".

Many Christians believe that all who do not believe in Christ will perish forever. Clearly, this view can hardly be maintained of those who were born before the coming of our Lord. And about those who did believe 'in Jesus', we immediately have to ask the question: to what extent was Jesus preached to them? Did it conform to the Christ of Scripture? What kind of Jesus did the people believe in during the Dark Ages? And what of the vast differences between Roman Catholics, Reformed, Methodists, and Full Gospel Christians, not to mention the Jehovah Witnesses, Adventists, and Mormons? Surely, we are not dealing with a magic name by which we are saved, but rather with meaningful faith in the name of Jesus! How many people really know Jesus the Savior, the Healer, the Restorer and the Baptizer in the Holy Spirit?

The last Judgment is for the category of people who never heard the pure "Word of God" preached to them. Yet they did what the law of God commanded, and their conscience often functioned quite adequately despite its shortcomings. In this context Paul mentioned the Gentiles who do by nature what the law requires, (Rom 2:14).

In the last paragraph of Matthew 25 we read about the people who share in the blessings of the heavenly Father, even though they knew little or nothing of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. In their lives these people showed divine qualities, namely compassion and loving kindness. When the book of life is opened, judgment is passed upon those in whom the image of God has not completely vanished. Their mind had functioned correctly and their conscience had not been seared. Their hearts were full of love of their fellow men, and they sought for the things God seeks for: salvation and restoration.

James the apostle said about them: "Mercy triumphs over judgment", or as the Amplified Bible puts it: "Mercy full of glad confidence exults victoriously over judgment", (James 2:13). Mercy shown to the least of men is regarded by the Lord as having been shown to Himself. His gospel is founded on the love and mercy of God, and Paul said that God will judge the secrets of men according to His gospel, (Rom 2:16).

An example of this type of person is Ebed Melech the Ethiopian who showed mercy to Jeremiah by carefully lifting him out of the pit he had been thrown in. Another is the Samaritan who showed mercy to his 'fellow man', 'one of the least of these', and helped him on his way. His compassion was not an outward compulsion but an inner need which was part of his inner make-up.

Why did the rich man lift up his eyes in Hades being in torment? Simply because he had failed to comfort and feed Lazarus; he had not paid attention to 'one of the least' among the children of man. Those who show compassion and mercy live in, the spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When the book of life is opened, the people recorded there are unable to see a connection between their good works and Jesus Christ. They both are found asking: "When did we see you?"

The last verse of Matthew 25 clearly refers to the final destination of those who were merciful and just in the natural world. They received eternal life. This salvation is possible for them because Jesus, the Lamb of God, died for the sins of the whole world. At the last judgment we see the far horizons of the limitless mercy of our God, who does not wish a single man to perish if he is hungry and thirsty for righteousness.

Does this mean that man has a second chance of salvation? No, for the people who stand before God here have never had a single chance, because the true gospel had never been preached to them.

After the last judgment those who are written in the book of life and judged according to their works will find their destination on a new earth. With the little children who were unable to distinguish good from evil they form the great category of which the bible says that the glory of the nations has to be brought into the gates of the New Jerusalem.

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Age of Accountability

by mak28 on 2012/6/14 11:10:48

Sorry for the long post ahead of time but I'd like to hear some thoughts on this.

I've been listening to a number of Paris Reidhead sermons lately, the So Great A Salvation series to be exact. He repeatedly references the age of accountability.

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Re: - posted by mak28, on: 2012/6/15 8:53

I appreciate the response and the detailed connections you've made with the clouds, the sea and their relation to believers. I've never heard it put that way and though I wouldn't care to use it myself (I'd never remember the details of it), I'll keep it in mind as something to search out in the Spirit. Interesting at the least!

I've never cared to explain what happened to those before Christ came in the flesh. In 1 Peter 1 we know the prophets had it revealed to them that they had received revelation of Christ and that in Hebrews 11 that the faith of men and women in ages past was counted as righteousness. Is there a doctrine there I want to declare, no. I appreciate that others have their opinions or even more so their convictions but I don't care to have my own statement myself. Certainly it is never by deeds but faith and never by keeping the law in their hearts for the law never saved anyone, only revealing the holiness of God and sinfulness of man. I'll leave the more exact propositions to those who care to go so far. I will not debate it.

All that said, I had asked about "the age of accountability" and you had made an initial statement on it but I'm not sure where there was clarity. I agree that there is no scriptural basis for a defined doctrine but how does what you said throughout your post match with the statement below you made at the end? I missed the connection.

"With the little children who were unable to distinguish good from evil"

I'll just note that I asked the little children at our Easter Egg Hunt (some church going and some not) this year, when preaching the gospel "how many of you have done something bad and were afraid to tell your parents?" Before I had gotten past "...something bad" they had all put hands up. It was actually quite comical, their bare honesty and the quickness in which they put their hands up. Even three year olds had their hands up. The young understand good and bad. It seems when they get older that they have too much pride and intelligence to admit it and do as they please. Little children are naturally scared of the appearance of evil. Completely out of context my youngest brother showed my 2yr old niece a Boglin (a "demon-like" puppet toy from the 80s, google it) thinking it would be funny. She was terrified. It's only when we get older we start seeing "there is nothing to be scared of," heaven and hell included.

In the end of it, I'm asking for any clarity you or anyone (perhaps someone with great conviction/background with it) can offer on why people hold the age of accountability as doctrine. I'll state for caution sake, I'm not asking anyone to tell me if children are definitively going to heaven or hell. I've stated I do not find myself making such statements with distinction. God is the sifter of hearts and souls. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? I'm merely curious about the idea being preached as doctrine.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2012/6/15 14:13

"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Gen. 18:25

The answer to Abraham's rhetorical question is obviously a resounding "YES!"

Quote: "three months ago a man came to our ministry building broken over his 12 year old niece dying the day before. I was already engaged with two other men but one of the other guys (who has supported us from the beginning) went out and talked with him and told him she was in heaven, guaranteed because she had not reached the age of accountability."

Tough call, but I probably would have told him the same thing under those circumstances. What is the alternative, (even if you thought she WASN'T in heaven)-- to tell the poor guy that you had your doubts? And since there is no way of knowing anyway, what purpose would there be in planting doubts in his mind about the eternal fate of his 12 year old niece?

I once heard Pastor Erwin Lutzer answer a late night call on Moody Radio from a woman who was grieved because her son had been killed in the gulf war, and she wasn't sure of his standing with God. He gave an answer that I always remembered, stating something to the effect that her son was in no better hands than the Lord's, who loved her son more than she could ever imagine and is the only Judge who could possibly take everything into account. That seemed to give her comfort.

The Judge of the earth will indeed do what is right.

Re: mak28 - posted by proudpapa, on: 2012/6/16 11:07

The Bible nowhere teaches The age of accountability doctrine, What it does teach however is why Men are guilty before God and Why the wrath of God comes on men, The Bible clearly teaches What Sin is, However tradition blinds scripture and teaches what the gnostics taught that sin is substance rather than choice.

If The Substance of man is sin that is to say that his very nature is sin in the eyes of God than as Augustine taught the Baby that dies will fall under the wrath of God.

of course Augustine believed in regenerational baptism so hence he taught that infants should be baptised to remove original sin.

Search Church History of How those whom Believed in Infant Baptism treated those whom believed in Believers Baptism.

The Bible on other Hand teaches very clearly, That Sin is choice, it is when we have a Law and break that Law that Sin is imputed to us. (The infant has no Law thus no Sin)

Re: Age of Accountability - posted by twayneb (), on: 2012/6/16 19:16

Paul lays out a principle in Romans 7 that I think may very well apply to this question of an age of accountability. He says in Rom 7:7-11...

(7) What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

(8) But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

(9) For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

(10) And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

(11) For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.

This principle can be coupled with Rom 4:15

(15) Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

I believe that there is an age where, for a child, the law comes. It is an age at which a person is aware that he or she has broken the law of God. At this point I believe the law comes and the child dies so to speak. I believe this age is different for every child. I have an aunt who was born again at age five, myself at eight, and a friend with Down's Syndrome who I believe never reached that age in almost thirty years of life.

Re: twayneb - posted by proudpapa, on: 2012/6/16 22:47

excellent Post, twayneb,

I live fairly Close to you

Re: - posted by mak28, on: 2012/6/21 10:46

I'm perplexed by this response, having difficulty with it. Here are my thoughts as I read and my response as best can be explained:

I don't think either one of those scriptures speak to there being literally no sin without the law. I believe they only speak of the inner revelation of our sin before God (wrought by the Holy Spirit) and the revelation of sin at the heart level convicting us of our guilt.

I say this because if I am ignorant of or read the Ten Commandments and am not convicted of sin, birthing repentance, am I not guilty? Is sin literally non-existent? Paul had grown up, as a Jew and a Pharisee, under these laws yet had clearly not been humbled and convicted by them till the Holy Spirit had revived them in his heart and broke him. He knew the law yet spoke of it as dead in Romans 7, saying he was without the law when clearly he wasn't. The fact was, it was dead in his heart, he was without the revelation of the law in his heart. It was not literally dead, he was not literally without the law merely because of his ignorance, a lack of revelation. (wrath is the same in that there was clearly wrath upon Adam, Cain, the people in Noah's age, Lot, Egypt, previous to the law, it is only revealed unto the heart through revelation)

I don't believe being without revelation of sin that we are saved but rather that, being without revelation of sin, we find ourselves in the exact state and definition of being lost. Lack of Holy Spirit revelation in regard to sin does not save. Because I do not believe I have sinned, have not heard the command or it has not been revealed to me by the Holy Spirit that I have sinned does not eliminate my sin. Only the blood of Christ saves, without it and the righteousness and the holiness imparted by it can we see the Lord.

Comprehension, Holy Spirit revelation of sin, is not required for damnation or all those that reject Christ, actively or passively, because of their spiritual blindness, ignorance would be saved. If this were true ALL would be made holy by the blood of Christ until we came to knowledge and revelation of our sin and the Great Commission would be a command of damnation, not good news.

So, what am I saying? Does this lack of revelation declare all children or your friend with Down Syndrome and others of the like damned? Not at all! In fact 1 Corinthians 7:14 would suggest better and more clearly what you eluded to, that your friend and the children of believers are covered to by the same grace which covers their believing parents. What does it say for children of unbelieving parents, there is no reference. Yet, we could say that stating that the children of believers are covered would suggest perhaps that children of unbelieving parents are uncovered.

In one last statement to give peace about the state of someone like your friend, if perhaps they were uncovered by their parents, going beyond ages and mental qualifications, I ask, "Do I believe God can reveal in the heart to your friend, to a child, to anyone though it be not expressed verbally in word, in a certain prayer or through the sacrament of baptism that they are indeed children of God?" "Can the Holy Spirit not testify with their spirit that they are His and He their Father?" "Is there faith outside of these specified doctrines/sacraments/ordinances which cannot be seen clearly by men but by God?" Undoubtedly. It is the law of faith.

Where does this leave me? I guess it does leave me with 1 Corinthians 7:14 as a reason for this doctrine in regard to children of believers. Does it give an age? No. But it does give reason. In fact, if it were not for this post it wouldn't have come up. I'll continue examining. Thank you for the responses! I hope I haven't offended, I have only aimed to make my thoughts open and clear.

Thanks brothers!

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2012/6/21 13:58

Mak28: I am reminded of a statement that Paul made in the book of Romans.

Rom 5:12-16

(12) Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

(13) (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

(14) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

(15) But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

(16) And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

There are several pretty difficult statements in scripture, and this is probably one of them. Paul seems to be implying that before the coming of the law men were lost in sin and suffered the natural consequences of death, but that sin was not imputed unto them before the coming of the law. Another interesting passage is in the book of 1 Peter.

1Pe 3:18-20

(18) For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

(19) By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

(20) Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

Apparently those who were pre-flood were given a chance to hear and respond to the gospel. They were just as lost as any of us were, but Christ, for some reason, was sent to preach to them so that those who responded to Him might also be saved.

My point was not that an infant is not born in sin, but rather when does that person become accountable for that sin. If at some point we are not accountable for our sin, and then if at some point later we are fully accountable, then there has to be some point in time, some event by which we pass from one state to the other. I believe that time to be when a person becomes aware that there is a God to whom he will answer. Here is another passage that might be applicable.

Rom 1:18-21

(18) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

(19) Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

(20) For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

(21) Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

A person does not have to have heard a "gospel presentation" in order to be accountable. God has clearly revealed it to all men. So I am not talking about a person in a remote jungle who may not have heard anyone share the gospel. Deep down inside even these people are aware that there is a creator to whom they are accountable and will stand in judgment fully aware of this knowledge. I am talking about a person who is very young or by means of corruption of the human flesh has or will never mature to the point of receiving this revelation.

Does that help clarify what I was saying?

Re: - posted by mak28, on: 2012/6/21 17:30

I'm not sure what to think. Clearly sin was imputed prior to Moses, for Adam died because of sin, was cast out and curse s were laid upon the land and all mankind after him. Was there then no law or was it just not defined for clarity as it was when given to Moses? Adam defied a command that was equally given by God and is God's Word not law as much as t he Law is God's Word?

Impute means "To ascribe; to attribute fault to; to set to the account of; to charge to one as the author, responsible origin ator, or possessor."

Wasn't Adam considered responsible? Isn't Paul essentially saying there was in fact always law, unwritten maybe but ev ident (in Adam's case far more evident as it was directly given and clearly punished with immediate consequence) as it i s in the passage from Romans 1?

That scripture in 1 Peter is indeed rough. My wife and I just read 1 Peter this morning (we are finishing the whole Bible t ogether (she'd never read it all) before our first child is born here in a short while) and I pointed out how it can be used fo r Purgatory, for Rob Bell's version of temporary hell and ultimate redemption and I myself find it difficult to ascertain anyt hing regarding these souls then being given a chance for redemption. Perhaps it only confirmed reason for their damnati on?

All of that said, I believe I can agree that there is at some point accountability, if only for children of believers by 1 Corint hians 7:14. Yet even there I am not clear but to say it is a priority or prime importance, in order to cast off all doubt, that all men raise their children in the reasonable fear of and love of a mighty, majestic, true, just and loving God as per Deut eronomy 6:6-9.

I maintain that God's work through the Holy Spirit can save those who would seem not to "grasp" the things of God in ou tward manner, like the young and the weak of mind, by His inward work. The Lord indeed judges the heart not the outwa rd appearance.

Thank you again for your thoughtful response. This has helped tremendously!

Re: mak28 - posted by proudpapa, on: 2012/6/21 22:57

RE: by mak28 on 2012/6/21 wrote

/So, what am I saying? Does this lack of revelation declare all children or your friend with Down Syndrome and others of the like damned? Not at all! In fact 1 Corinthians 7:14 would suggest better and more clearly what you eluded to, that yo ur friend and the children of believers are covered to by the same grace which covers their believing parents. What does it say for children of unbelieving parents, there is no reference. Yet, we could say that stating that the children of believer s are covered would suggest perhaps that children of unbelieving parents are uncovered./

1 Corinthians 7:14 ?? What odd understandings Orthodoxy interpets from scriptures!

Who was Josiah's Father ??

Who was Josiah's Grandfather??

Re: - posted by mak28, on: 2012/6/22 8:31

Never did I say that one from a non-Christian household could not be a Christian/God-fearing man. Apparently I have be en drastically unclear! I apologize.

It seems you have misinterpreted what I meant by covered. It was meant as in the children being covered by their believi ng Father or Mother's grace and only if we believe that's what 1 Corinthians 7:14 says. I have staked no claim there but r eferenced it only to say that it seems to say such. You have interpreted what I said as a claim that only believing parents can have children who are believers. I made no such claim! Clearly Josiah was not covered by his Father's grace nor his grandfather's grace because they had none. They were evil men. Did God not choose and separate Josiah anyway? Of course he did! What has that to do with whether he was covered by grace through believing parents, nothing because th

ey were not.

I apologize if I have lacked clarity.

Re: Age of Accountability, on: 2012/6/22 9:38

The "Age of Accountability" usually begins when a child understand what is right and what is wrong.

There is no set age. Society has dictated this and somehow it got woven into the fabric of our faith. Twelve or Thirteen is usually the cut off point of this 'age' within this concept. But there is no definite answer to this question, every child is different in their development in understanding right from wrong.

If they can reach into the cookie jar having no fear of who's watching they have not reached that age. But if they scheme and plot, and sneak into the kitchen, open up the jar, carefully looking around that no one is watching and they snatch their booty then the gig is up, they KNOW they are doing wrong.

For Adam and Eve, their accountability came when they decided to reach out and partake of the tree. From that time, they knew they were in the wrong and they desperately needed a right to get out of their wrong. Enter chastisement.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2012/6/22 10:00

Quote: "If they can reach into the cookie jar having no fear of who's watching they have not reached that age. But if they scheme and plot, and sneak into the kitchen, open up the jar, carefully looking around that no one is watching and they snatch their booty then the gig is up, they KNOW they are doing wrong."

My 3 year old grandson does this. But there ain't no way he's reached the age of accountability.

People who have been Christians for years can't agree 100% on what it means to be "saved."

How can a 3 year old understand?

Re: , on: 2012/6/22 12:55

Quote:

----- My 3 year old grandson does this. But there ain't no way he's reached the age of accountability.

Of course not, he's so cute and cuddly, how can such a child be accountable for his actions? But there he is a product of Adam.

Quote:

----- How can a 3 year old understand?

They don't need to understand brother, they just need to know. The slap on the hand for taking the cookie, automatically causes their tender eyes to be enlightened. They understand that by taking the cookie, they going to get a slap if caught. So they learn quickly by asking for a cookie instead.

Much like us doing our own thing as believers and all we see is frustration and a brick wall. After years of trying we finally start asking God for things instead of scheming and plotting.

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2012/6/22 13:01

Quote:
----- They understand that by taking the cookie, their going to get a slap if caught. So they learn quickly by asking for a cookie instead.

This is called behavior modification. You can train monkeys that way too, through positive reinforcement works far better for both human and beast.

If that is the method and means by which we understand "accountability" , why would Jesus have needed to die oh, and rise again?

Diane

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2012/6/22 15:35

Quote:

"Of course not, he's so cute and cuddily, how can such a child be accountable for his actions?"

Obviously a very young child has some idea of what is right and what is wrong. That is entirely different from being at an "age of accountability."

I hope you are not suggesting that a 3 year old is damned to hell if they die- regardless of how clever or dense they may be.

If you are, I am sure thankful that God is their judge and not you.

Re: , on: 2012/6/22 15:46

Quote:
----- I hope you are not suggesting that a 3 year old is damned to hell if they die- regardless of how clever or dense they may be.

Jumping the gun are we just a wee bit, eh?

Your putting words in my mouth. This "Age of Accountability" is not even found in the bible, so why are we defending it? I am offering an opinion, thats it. I am not speaking against your grandson, God forbid. So please don't make this personal, I have enough of my own problems than to deal with the status of the salvation of others.

Re: , on: 2012/6/22 15:48

Quote:
----- If that is the method and means by which we understand "accountability" , why would Jesus have needed to die oh, and rise again?

Because,

Romans 8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh...

You can train the best of them to be accountable but in the end, they will fall short of the glory of God.

So enter Christ.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2012/6/22 15:54

Quote:

-----If they can reach into the cookie jar having no fear of who's watching they have not reached that age. But if they scheme and plot, and sneak into the kitchen, open up the jar, carefully looking around that no one is watching and they snatch their booty then the gig is up, they KNOW they are doing wrong.

Approved: There is a difference, I think, in knowing that it is wrong for me to stick my hand in the cookie jar and knowing that by stealing I am breaking God's law. If I get my hand slapped for taking a cookie without permission, I will be looking around then next time I really want a cookie. But that does not mean that I am aware that I am breaking God's law.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2012/6/22 16:08

Quote:

-----I'm not sure what to think. Clearly sin was imputed prior to Moses, for Adam died because of sin, was cast out and curses were laid upon the land and all mankind after him. Was there then no law or was it just not defined for clarity as it was when given to Moses? Adam defied a command that was equally given by God and is God's Word not law as much as the Law is God's Word?

Impute means "To ascribe; to attribute fault to; to set to the account of; to charge to one as the author, responsible originator, or possessor."

Wasn't Adam considered responsible? Isn't Paul essentially saying there was in fact always law, unwritten maybe but evident (in Adam's case far more evident as it was directly given and clearly punished with immediate consequence) as it is in the passage from Romans 1?

mak28: I hope I am not digressing too much from the initial question, but here goes anyway.

The coming of the old testament law was not the beginning of the definition of sin, nor was it the first time that man was held accountable for sin. The scripture says that sin is not imputed where there is no law. There was a time, in the city in which I live, when Joplin was a late 1800's mining town. It was a rough place back then. Prostitution was, at one time, legal in Joplin in that there were no laws against it. It was still sin. It was still wrong. But you would not be arrested and punished for the act. Now it is illegal and it will be imputed to you if you are caught.

The consequences of sin, death, reigned over all of Adam's race because of Adam's sin. God judged the world with a world-wide flood because of sin.

The Old Testament law was not God's complete holy standard. It was holy. It was righteous. It was of God and it was God's standard, but it was not the complete holy standard of God. It was only a shadow. It is not like God had an epiphany and said, "I think I will come up with what I call right and wrong and call it the law." Rather, He said, "Because of the great transgression of man, because of the abundance of the sin of man's heart, I will institute the law." He did it to restrain sin until Christ should come. He did it to show man that God's holy standard was something man could never live up to. It served as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

But God's holy standard is so far beyond what any of us can or could ever reach by our own efforts. The carnal man is enmity against God. So we now have a way provided by which we can be born again in the spirit. We now have the law of God written on our hearts and are governed by the Holy Spirit rather than by a carnal ordinance. The carnal ordinance was nailed to the cross.

Scripture is pretty clear about what happened to the people who lived before the flood, and it seems that they had a final chance to accept or reject Christ. For Rob Bell to use the verses in 1 Peter to do away with Hell is to take that scripture WAY out of context and to twist scripture. I am not sure what happened to people who lived pre-law. I am not sure what exactly happens to those who were post law and pre-Christ. One thing I do know is that God is just and righteous and whatever He does will be right and just. I just do not see plainly from scripture what happens to these groups. But we do know

now that Paul, in Romans, is clear that they will be without excuse.

Re: , on: 2012/6/22 16:10

Quote:

----- But that does not mean that I am aware that I am breaking God's law.

Allow me to be stupid for a moment (which I am sure most of you already think I am). But I see that he is aware because of the results, a stern warning or a slap.

I think this Age of Accountability comes from what Paul said about children coming under the protection of their parents until they reach an age where they can be responsible or think on their own, it's possible that someone drew straws to find out what age that should be.

I remember years ago an old farmer had lost his young son through a horrible Hay Baler accident. For years he hated God for taking his son. Dad was buying his farm and Dad being a young believer at the time heard the story from this man and how he didn't believe in God because he was told his child wasn't saved and now is in hell.

This bothered my father and he took to the scriptures to find out if he could somehow bring comfort to this old man. He found the story about David and Bathsheba's son the first one that died. I am going to quote from another site that bears this same thing and my father's words. When this was told to the old farmer the man was relieved, and began to weep.

"King David gave us an important proof in his life and actions. Because of an adulterous relationship with Bathsheba, she had given birth to a son. God, in judgment on David, told David that his son would die. David fasted and pleaded with God for the life of the son. David's servants were so worried about him, that they feared to tell him when the child died. Yet, when David discovered the fact, he washed, changed his clothes, and sat down to eat. When the servants expressed their surprise, he responded, "While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Samuel 12:22-23

). David knew God and knew he would be with Him. But he also knew that he would see his son there. This is an encouragement to every parent who has lost a child."

Taken from this source: <http://www.learnthebible.org/the-age-of-accountability.html>

Re: mak28 - posted by proudpapa, on: 2012/6/22 19:36

RE:mak28 wrote /Never did I say that one from a non-Christian household could not be a Christian/God-fearing man. Apparently I have been drastically unclear! I apologize./

Hi mak28 it is easy to misunderstand each other on these forums, But I knew the point you were making. My point is that your interpretation of 1cor.7:14 as was Calvin's would conclude that this man that became /Christian/God-fearing man/ later in his life raised in a non-Christian household, had he died in his infancy would be in Hell where the (worm dieth not!!!)

Am I misunderstanding what you are implying as the meaning of 1cor 7:14??

RE: mak28 wrote /I have staked no claim there but referenced it only to say that it seems to say such/

you are searching for the truths as am I and I appreciate that spirit, my understandings are continually changing and I am open to God changing them. I personally at this point in my life can not at all see how 1 cor 7:14 is alluding to some special Grace passed on to the children of Believers that is automatically removed in the act of divorce as what this interpretation would imply, Rather it seems clear that it is implying the natural course of direction that the Child would likely experience. Broken Homes often break the spirit of a child, which can lead to a destructive life (but not always!) Children raised by parents, that raise them in the Love and admiration of the Lord are more Likely to follow in their parents steps (but not always)

Re: mak28 wrote /Clearly Josiah was not covered by his Father's grace nor his grandfather's grace because they had no

ne./

That is what I wanted you to admit.

So by your interpatation of 1 Cor 7:14, Had Josiah died as an infant he would "not be covered by his Father's grace nor his grandfather's grace because they had none" thus Hell Fire (where the worm dieth not)not because of his actions, but his parents, Is that not what you are implying??

Re: Age of Accountability - posted by elias7291 (), on: 2012/8/6 0:42

Bumping up an old post.

Here is an article regarding this topic on the got questions ministry website:

<http://www.gotquestions.org/age-of-accountability.html>

Blessings.

Re: - posted by mak28, on: 2012/9/20 16:45

Sorry about leaving this thread. We had our son Benjamin on June 25th.

Elias: I'll have to check out that link at some point.

I'll let the thread go since it's old now anyway. It didn't seem like my thoughts were coming off clearly since they were misinterpreted several times. I didn't start the thread to give my thoughts primarily anyway. Just curious what others thought. It seems the thread has run its course.

Thanks everyone for your thoughts!