

## OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

INTRO: In the first message we looked at Historic Calvinism. In the second message I spoke on what I believe the Bible teaches on the issue of Once Saved Always Safe. In this last message I want to answer some objections to the view I hold. I also want to ask the Calvinist some questions and have him answer you so you know how he thinks. I can only deal with a few main issues in the time I have. If I do not deal with a problem passage high in your mind do not hesitate to speak to me later. I cannot deal with all the issues. I probably do not even know all the issues.

### I. OBJECTIONS OF THE CALVINIST

#### A. John 10:27-30

The Bible says that as Christians we are in God's hand and no man can pluck us out of the Father's hand (John 10:27-30). Brother Phil, what can you say to that? The Bible is so plain that no one can pluck a Christian out of God's hand.

I could not agree with you more wholeheartedly. Not only can no man take you out of God's hand but the devil can't either, nor can anything else. There is no external power can take one out of God's hand. But then, on the other hand, there is no external power that can put you into God's hand. The Catholics have tried it. They forced people into conversion. But were they in God's hand? No! You can get into God's hand only by personal choice. You can never be forced in. Nor can you ever be forced out. You can only leave by personal choice. Nowhere does the Bible teach that you cannot leave God's hand. On the contrary the Scriptures teach that if you persist in gross sins you will fall into the hands of the living God in judgement (Heb. 10:26-31).

#### B. Romans 8:35-39

This passage clearly shows that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Again I answer that each of the things listed in this passage is an external power and no external power can dislodge us from the love of Christ. This can only be done by personal choice.

Furthermore, let me ask you: How does one stay in the love of God? Jude 20-21 answers this. The imperative verb is that we are to keep ourselves in the love of God. Getting into the love of God and staying in the love of God is man's responsibility. God provided the way but man must appropriate God's provision. The three modifying participles in this passage tell us how to stay in the love of God. First, by building yourself up on your most holy faith. Second, praying in the Holy Spirit. Third, by looking for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. The responsibility of staying in God's love is clearly placed on man.

### C. Philippians 1:6

Here God's Word promises us that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. If you fail God's Word is not true.

One of the most important rules of Bible interpretation is context. When I teach the course on how to interpret the Bible one of the questions I have on the test is, "Philippians 1:6 says, 'He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ: [ ] True or [ ] False.'" Time and again I will get the answer [x] True.

I want you to look at this verse in the Bible and tell me if it says that. You see, what it says is, "I am confident that He who has begun a good work in you..." I had finished teaching the section on election in the doctrine of salvation in a certain place. The students talked to the principal of the school about what I had been teaching. It happened that that day I was invited to the principal's house for dinner. He insisted that God in his secret decrees elected certain individuals to salvation. Then he proceeded to tell me that the Scripture promised that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. So I pointed out to him that the verse reads, "...being confident that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ..." Then I asked my friend in whom Paul's confidence was, God or man? Without a moment's delay he said, "In God of course!" Then I said, "How then does the Scripture say, '...just as it is right for me to think this of you all...?'"

That was the end of our discussion. You see, Paul's confidence was not only in God, but also in the Philippians. And why did he place such confidence in the Philippians? Note verse 5. From the first day until now they had fellowshiped with Paul in the Gospel. They had helped him time and again. That was 10 or more years. In spite of persecution and suffering for their faith they were still with Paul. That is why Paul was confident that God would be able to complete his work and that is why Paul could say, "...just as it is right for me to think this of you all..."

Does this verse promise that once you accept Christ as your Saviour you are always safe? That is not even remotely connected to the purpose of this passage.

#### D. The word "foreknowledge"

Pastor Phil, you have made a big issue out of election being based on God's foreknowledge not predeterminism. You have said that foreknowledge is simply foreknowledge. What do you say to Acts 2:23. You said you have studied Greek in order to better understand the Bible. You know that according to Sharp's rule in this passage the nouns *predeterminate counsel* and *foreknowledge* are connected by the Greek word *kai*. The first has the definite article and the second does not. The conclusion is that both refer to the same thing and therefore foreknowledge means more than simply foreknowledge.

I have added this objection, not because most of you will understand the argument and the answer to it but because per chance these taped messages will get into the hands of those who have studied Greek, possibly even Bible teachers.

There are several good answers that could be given. However, possibly one answer will suffice. Yes, Sharp's rule, to my knowledge has never been successfully refuted so we accept it as true. In Matthew 24:36 we have the same Greek construction connecting the words *day* and *hour*. These terms both refer to the fact that no man knows the precise time of the Lord's return. However, when the word *day* or *hour* is used in another context we cannot say they always refer to a precise time. The context must determine the usage of the word. That is a law of Bible interpretation. So, with regard to the word *foreknowledge*, even if you insist that it means more in Acts 2:23 than *foreknowledge*

you MUST allow that it does not determine that the meaning in all other contexts is the same as in Acts 2:23.

Furthermore, using the Calvinistic argument of this verse I could insist that it is determined counsel that takes on added meaning not foreknowledge.

As much as the Calvinist would like the word foreknowledge mean something else than simply foreknowledge, they must acknowledge a rather strained argument at best.

E. The term "eternal life"

Brother Phil, the Bible says that if we believe in Christ we have eternal life. How can you say you have eternal life if you can lose it? Surely it was not eternal life you have if you can lose it because it has then come to an end.

You greatly err not knowing the Scriptures. Even Calvinists like C. I. Scofield of the famous Scofield Bible know better than to use this to support their view. What does the Scripture mean when it speaks of eternal life. First, let me tell you what it does not mean. By eternal life the Scriptures do not mean unending life, that is quantity of life. If the Scripture meant quantity of life, that is that it never ends then no man could ever have eternal life. When the word eternal is used to refer to quantity of life it speaks of a life without end and without beginning. Such is the kind of life only God can have. Man can never have this kind of life for with man it has a beginning.

What then does the Bible mean by eternal life? It does not speak of quantity of life but of quality of life. It is not the length of the life that is referred to but the kind of life. It is the God kind of life. John 17:3 teaches that eternal life is to know God.

## II. QUESTIONS FOR THE CALVINIST

A. 2 Thessalonians 2:3

The Scriptures speak of apostacy. 2 Thessalonians 2:3 tells us that the day of Christ will not come unless there is a great falling away first. The words falling away come from the Greek word apostacy. If a believer cannot fall away what is this passage talking about?

Answer: This passage speaks of professors not possessors. Those who profess to be Christians and fall away will be lost.

How can somebody fall away from something he has not had?

B. Revelation 3:5

Let me ask you another question: Revelation 3:5 promises that if one is an overcomer the Lord will not blot his name out of the book of life. Why would he say that if it is not possible.

Answer: This speaks of physical book of life not the eternal book of life. If you overcome you will not die physically. If you do not you will lose your life.

Further question: Rev. 21:27 says that only those written in the Lamb's book of life will enter heaven. How do you harmonize that with your teaching.

Answer: The book of life and the Lamb's book of life are two different books.

Now notice that the same verse speaks of being clothed in white garments. This of course takes place in heaven not on earth. How then does the book of life in this context refer to physical life? And again, notice that those whose name is not blotted out of the book of life will have their names confessed by Christ before the Father. The context of the verse itself does not allow the physical book of life view. Furthermore, the overcomers of all seven churches receive promises. The promises are all spiritual and future with the exception of this one if in fact it speaks of the book of physical life. I conclude that the argument of the physical book of life has been raised, not from objective study of God's Word, but from defence of a position.

C. Hebrew 10:29

How would you answer Hebrews 10:29 regarding the person who tramples the Son of God under foot and counts the blood by which he was sanctified an unclean thing?

"This does not prove that he was necessarily a Christian. The whole nation of Israel was sanctified by the blood of the covenant; in a certain sense the whole world has been

sanctified by the blood of the cross" (Ironsides, p. 39; The Eternal Security of the Believer).

Anyone who can accept this reasoning should remain a Calvinist.

D. Matthew 24:13

This verse says that he that endures to the end will be saved. The implication is clear; he that does not endure to the end will be lost. How do you answer that?

The only way you can tell if someone is truly born again is if they endure to the end. If they do not then you know they were never saved in the first place.

E. Hebrews 6:4-6 tells us it is impossible to renew someone to repentance once they fall away. How do you answer that?

One group answers that this passage does not speak of truly born again people. The arguments are as complicated and lengthy as they are false.

Another Calvinist will say, "Who can argue that the man spoken of here is not a born again believer. Obviously we allow the words *taste* and *partaker* to refer to a saved person in other texts so we must here as well. This text sets forth a hypothetical case. It cannot actually happen but argument is made from the hypothesis."

After last Sunday I learned that what I referred to as the Blue Hills is actually the Buffalo Head hills. Let me illustrate the hypothetical view with my illustration of last Sunday: I would say, "Trent, it is impossible for you, once you are grown up, if you move the Buffalo Head Hills farther away, to take over our farm." In other words the warning ceases to be a valid warning because the condition can never possibly be met.

Again, if you can accept this type of reasoning you should be a Calvinist.

CONCL:

a. Is the believer eternally secure? Yes but not unconditionally. The just shall live by faith. The whole of salvation, past, present and future is by grace through faith.

b. Can a person lose his salvation? Sadly, yes. Persist in gross sin and live after the flesh and you cannot inherit the kingdom of God. You will die. Perhaps Saul of the OT and Judas Iscariot of the NT are examples of this.

c. Can I be saved then lost then saved then lost? No. If you cross the point of no return (Heb. 6:4-6) then there is no more coming back.

d. How do I know I have not crossed the point of no return? I do not find anything in Scripture whereby we can know this. Deal with your sins and live by faith and you know you have not crossed the line.

The nature of this message brings me to a solemn conclusion. We must not fool around with sin. At the last it biteth like an adder.

But it is not only solemn. The good part is that we can be saved right now, we can go on having salvation and have assurance of salvation as we go and if we live faithfully we will be finally and ultimately saved.

Remember that those who will ultimately go to be with the Lord are called and chosen and faithful. Check every reference in the NT to faithfulness and you will see why Jesus said in Revelation 2:10, "Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."

ONCE SAVED ALWAYS SAFE?  
OBJECTIONS ANSWERED  
Review Questions

Give the Calvinistic position on each of the following and then your speakers position. Try to boil each answer down to 1-3 sentences.

1. John 10:27-30:

Calvinistic position:

Speaker's Position:

2. Romans 8:35-39

Calvinistic Position:

Speaker's Position:

3. Philippians 1:6

Calvinistic Position:



Speaker's Position:

4. The word "foreknowledge"

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

5. The term "eternal life"

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

6. 2 Thessalonians 2:3

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

7. Revelation 3:5

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

8. Hebrews 10:29

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

9. Matthew 24:13

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

10: Hebrews 6:4-6

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

11. According to your speaker a believer is:

- Unconditionally eternally secure
- Conditionally eternally secure

12. According to your speaker a Christian: (Mark the correct answers)

- Can lose his salvation
- Cannot lose his salvation
- Can be lost then saved then lost then saved etc...
- Can lose his salvation and if so can never regain it

13. According to the book of Revelation those who will ultimately go to be with Jesus will be those who are

\_\_\_\_\_ called \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

ONCE SAVED ALWAYS SAFE?  
OBJECTIONS ANSWERED  
Review Questions Keys /50

Give the Calvinistic position on each of the following and then your speakers position. Try to boil each answer down to 1-3 sentences.

1. John 10:27-30: 4pts. @ 2ea.

Calvinistic position:

Speaker's Position:

2. Romans 8:35-39 4pts. @ 2ea.

Calvinistic Position:

Speaker's Position:

3. Philippians 1:6 4pts. @ 2ea.

Calvinistic Position:

Speaker's Position:

4. The word "foreknowledge" 4pts. @ 2ea.

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

5. The term "eternal life" 4pts. @ 2ea.

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

6. 2 Thessalonians 2:3 4pts. @ 2ea.

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

7. Revelation 3:5 4pts. @ 2ea.

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

8. Hebrews 10:29 4pts. @ 2ea.

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

9. Matthew 24:13 4pts. @ 2ea.

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

10: Hebrews 6:4-6 4pts. @ 2ea.

Calvinist Position:

Speaker's Position:

11. According to your speaker a believer is:

Unconditionally eternally secure

Conditionally eternally secure 2pts.

12. According to your speaker a Christian: (Mark the correct answers) 4pts. @ 2ea.

Can lose his salvation

Cannot lose his salvation

Can be lost then saved then lost then saved etc...

Can lose his salvation and if so can never regain it

13. According to the book of Revelation those who will ultimately go to be with Jesus will be those who are

\_\_\_called\_\_\_ and \_\_\_chosen\_\_\_ and \_\_\_faithful\_\_\_.

4pts. @ 2ea.