

Eternal Security ~ Part 21

Election Redux

In my last post, we tackled the issue of the **Unpardonable Sin** and **Grieving the Ruach**. I want to re-cap where we have been on this journey for those who may not have been on the whole journey with us and refresh the memory (including mine) for those who have walked this road with me.

- Eternal Security ~ Part 1** Introduction to the series where I explained why the study was timely and why it was important to me (and presumably to my readers). I asked the question ~ **Can Salvation Be Lost?**
- Eternal Security ~ Part 2** I presented a **Glossary of Terms** that I would be exploring.
- Eternal Security ~ Part 3** We began to explore the concept of **Eternal Security**.
- Eternal Security ~ Part 4 ~ 6** We looked at the concept of **Apostasy** and touched on **Backsliding**. Before wrapping up this series, I will return to this topic and reveal my personal position on this as I answer the question of **Can Salvation Be Lost?**
- Eternal Security ~ Part 7** In this post, I presented scriptural references to **God's Sovereignty and Free Will** and quoted from Clarence Larkin and A.W. Tozer. I concluded that God's Sovereignty takes into consideration man's free will to accept or reject His offer of salvation.
- Eternal Security ~ Part 8 ~ 9** In these posts, we looked at the beginnings of **The Protestant Reformation** and a brief bio-sketch of **John Calvin** and his teachings.
- Eternal Security ~ Part 10 ~ 13** We explored spread of **Calvinism**, the **Synod of Dort**, the **Westminster Confession of Faith** and the **Five Points of Calvinism**.
- Eternal Security ~ Part 14** I presented a brief bio-sketch of **Jacobus Arminius** the 'father' of **Arminianism**.
- Eternal Security ~ Part 15 ~ 18** In these posts, we were introduced to the **Remonstrance**, the historical development of **Arminian Theology**, as well as the tenets of **Arminian Theology**.
- Eternal Security ~ Part 19** In this post, we explored the **Calvinistic View** and **Arminian View** of Election.
- Eternal Security ~ Part 20** In my last post, we looked at the concept of the **Unpardonable Sin** and **Grieving the Ruach**.

I've done my best to provide a balanced approach to present the material to date by using the same sources to present the basic differences between **Calvinism** and **Arminianism**. Now, I want to look at some of the contested passages I was not able to more fully address previously.

Election

In **Part 12**, we learned that Calvinists believe in **Unconditional Election**. **Calvinism** teaches that from eternity past, God has unconditionally elected certain ones to salvation regardless of any merit on their part. **Unconditional** emphasizes that election is not conditioned on God's foreknowledge that certain ones will believe in Yeshua. Election is not conditioned on man's ability or response. This is frequently referred to as God foreordained those who would be saved and those who would be sentenced to eternal damnation. In support of that position, Calvinists look to the following passages of Scripture:

"Because those whom He knew in advance, He also determined in advance would be conformed to the pattern of His Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers; and those whom He thus determined in advance, He also called; and those whom He called, He also caused to be considered righteous; and those whom He caused to be considered righteous He also glorified!" ~ Romans 8:29-30.

"Before they were born, before they had done anything at all, either good or bad (so that God's plan might remain a matter of his sovereign choice, not dependent on what they did, but on God, who does the calling)" ~ Romans 9:11.

"In the Messiah He chose us in love before the creation of the universe to be holy and without defect in His presence. He determined in advance that through Yeshua the Messiah we would be His sons ... Also in union with Him we were given an inheritance, we who were picked in advance according to the purpose of the One who effects everything in keeping with the decision of his will" ~ Ephesians 1:4-5, 11.

In **Part 19**, we learned that **Arminians** believe that **Election** is not absolute or unconditional but **Conditional**, contingent upon the proper acceptance of such gifts of grace as God by His Ruach and providence puts within the reach of men. In support of that position, **Arminians** look to the following passages of Scripture:

"He wants all humanity to be delivered and come to full knowledge of the truth" ~ 1 Timothy 2:4.

"Indeed, it is for this that we toil and strive: we have our hope set on a living God who is the deliverer of all humanity, especially of those who trust" ~ 1 Timothy 4:10.

Speaking to the Jewish rulers (clearly God's elect), Stephen said: *"Stiffnecked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You continually oppose the Ruach HaKodesh! You do the same things your fathers did!"* ~ Acts 7:51.

"The next day, Yochanan saw Yeshua coming toward him and said, "Look! God's lamb! The one who is taking away the sin of the world!" ~ John 1:29.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only and unique Son, so that everyone who trusts in Him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but rather so that through Him, the world might be saved" ~ John 3:16-17 (emphasis added).

"In other words, just as it was through one offense that all people came under condemnation, so also it is through one righteous act that all people come to be considered righteous. For just as through the disobedience of the one man, many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the other man, many will be made righteous" ~ Romans 5:18-19 (emphasis added).

"For just as in connection with Adam all die, so in connection with the Messiah all will be made alive" ~ 1 Corinthians 15:22 (emphasis added).

So, the key difference between **Calvinists** and **Arminians** on the issue of **Election** appears to me based upon the question: Did God foreordained those who could only accept the Gospel message or did He foreknow those that would? As for me, there is no way that I can accept a God of love that foreordained His children to eternal damnation. Consequently, I must come down on the side of the **Arminians** on this one issue.

In my next post, I will continue to examine several other the contested passages we have encountered along our journey.