



Tough Questions

The Journey – Fall 2017

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Christian Life Assembly



Tough Question #1



Tough Questions

- **If humans colonize the moon or Mars before Jesus returns, will this affect the Rapture? (would a Christian miss the rapture because they are not on the earth?)**
- **Since Jesus is coming back in the clouds of earth, this is an interesting question.**
- **1st Thes 4:14 For since we believe that Jesus died and was raised to life again, we also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with him the believers who have died.**



Tough Questions

- **In the rapture Jesus is coming to raise the dead in Christ and to translate the living believer.**
- **What if we colonize Mars, then 500 years pass, and then the rapture happens? By that time believers will be buried in both planets.**
- **My best guess – Jesus will work it out. 😊**



Tough Question #2



Tough Questions

- **Is it possible there are other universes? Is the Bible clear that there is only one universe?**
- **The bible is not clear that there is only one universe, but there is no mention of other universes in the bible.**
- **But let's dream a little about what it might mean if there are other universes.....**



Tough Questions

- **Psalm 19:1** The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship. 2 Day after day they continue to speak; night after night they make him known.
- **So I think we can say with confidence that if other universes exist they have the same Creator and their purpose would be the same as this one - to praise, exalt, and magnify Him!**



Tough Question #3



Tough Questions

- Repetitive sin – can we exceed the “seventy times seven” rule noted by Jesus?
- In the question an example (smoking) was provided so if I commit this sin, ask Jesus for forgiveness, and then continue the pattern, is there some point where the Lord will say “enough”, “choose your sin, or choose Me!”?
- At what point could I be in danger of taking grace for granted?



Tough Questions

- **I believe this is not just AN important question for the Christian to resolve, but perhaps THE question to resolve.**
- **Am I still saved? Was I ever saved? Are questions that arise from this struggle.**
- **Assurance of our salvation is an issue that we must settle if we are to rest in Christ and be free to worship Him.**



Tough Questions

- My addition to this question is this – at some point I am in danger of losing God’s blessing?
- So I think we need to start by establishing a safety net for ourselves and the only way I know to do that is return to what we might call “first principles”.
- Gal 3:2 2 Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by obeying the law of Moses? Of course not! *You received the Spirit because you believed the message you heard about Christ.* 3 How foolish can you be? *After starting your new lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort?*



Tough Questions

- **1st Peter 1:2** God the Father knew you and chose you long ago, and *His Spirit has made you holy*. As a result, you have obeyed him and have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. May God give you more and more grace and peace. **3** All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. *It is by His great mercy that we have been born again*, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, **4** and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. **5** *And through your faith, God is protecting you by His power until you receive this salvation*, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see.



Tough Questions

- **So here is what I see from those verses of scripture – it is God who called us, and saved us by His power through our faith.**
- **The logical question at this point would be – if I am saved by grace through faith, why would I ever think that now I must grow by my works?**
- **This is really the point of Paul’s letter to the Galatians.**



Tough Questions

- We also have the testimony of Paul regarding the “sin principle” living within him.
- Rom 7:18 And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. *I want to do what is right, but I can't. 19 I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.* 20 But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it.



Tough Questions

- And we also have these words of John regarding the believer and his relationship to sin.
- **1st John 2:3 And we can be sure that we know him if we obey his commandments. 4 If someone claims, “I know God,” but doesn’t obey God’s commandments, that person is a liar and is not living in the truth. 5 But those who obey God’s word truly show how completely they love him. That is how we know we are living in him. 6 Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did.**



Tough Questions

- **1st John 3:7** Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it shows that they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous. 8 But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil. 9 Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life is in them. So they can't keep on sinning, because they are children of God. 10 So now we can tell who are children of God and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live righteously and does not love other believers does not belong to God.



Tough Questions

- So what are we establishing? That we are saved by grace through faith and not by our works, pre or post salvation.
- Isaiah 38:17 Indeed it was for my own peace that I had great bitterness; but You have lovingly delivered my soul from the pit of corruption, for *You have cast all my sins behind* Your back.
- Literally “between the God’s shoulder blades” the one spot that you cannot see no matter how hard you may try.



Tough Questions

- **So here is my answer – we are saved by grace and not by works AND we are not kept by our works, but by the power of God.**
- **We will all sin, so the test is not “do we sin?” – the test is do we love Jesus enough to hate our sin?**
- **From Paul’s words alone we get the sense he had already passed the “seventy times seven” threshold so what are we to make of that?**



Tough Questions

- Rom 7:21 I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. 22 *I love God’s law with all my heart.* 23 But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. 24 Oh, what a miserable person I am! *Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death?* *25 Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.* So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God’s law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin.



Tough Questions

- **Rom 8:1** So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. **2** And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. **3** The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. *And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins.* **4** He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.



Tough Questions

- Paul tells us some of the most important information we can possess for daily living – “we are, and will continue to be in a battle with sin”. (get used to it)
- *The right response is to acknowledge what is going on, keep short accounts with God, and press on.*
- If the very best situation for us was that we would get saved and never struggle with sin, then that is how God would have designed it!



Tough Questions

- **Think about it this way – the bad news is that we are still prone to sin, and will still sin.**
- **The good news, and is in fact a proof that we are saved, is that when we sin we feel miserable.**
- **Our consciences are awakened, and more importantly the Holy Spirit begins to convict and He will not stop until we have confessed, repented anew, and are back on track.**



Tough Questions

- The most practical advice I have for dealing with sin is to spend as much time as possible reading the Word of God.
- Psalm 119:11 *I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*
- The “prodigal son” sinned against his father, but never lost his place in his father’s family. He lost blessing for a time and suffered for a time, but was still a son.



Tough Questions

- **And one final aspect regarding our struggle with sin – let's separate, as two separate issues, salvation and fellowship.**
- **The only way to lose your salvation is to stop believing, but we can lose fellowship through our disobedience.**
- **Both are extremely serious, but for different reasons.**



Tough Questions

- I don't have to explain the terror of losing salvation for that should be self-explanatory – separation from God for eternity in the lake of fire.
- But to lose fellowship with God ought to be viewed as an awful loss in this life and in eternity.
- 1st John 1:6 So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God *but go on living in spiritual darkness*; we are not practicing the truth. 7 But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.



Tough Questions

- **The Greek word that is translated “fellowship” is Koinonia which means “participation”, “partnership”, and “communion” as well as “fellowship”.**
- **I think it is obvious by the meaning of “fellowship” that when we walk in sin God does not participate in our lives.**
- **He will not cooperate and participate in a life that is fixed on sin – we lose His power and His presence.**



Tough Questions

- **So what might God do in a situation where one of His children fall out of fellowship with Him?**
- **Does He immediately condemn us and separate Himself from us?**
- **What do good parents do when a child, through disobedience, falls out of fellowship with the family?**



Tough Questions

- **Heb 12:5** And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, “My child, don’t make light of the Lord’s discipline, and don’t give up when he corrects you. **6** For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.” **7** As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? **8** If God doesn’t discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all. **9** Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn’t we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever? **10** For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God’s discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. **11** No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it’s painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way. **12** So take a new grip with your tired hands and strengthen your weak knees. **13** Mark out a straight path for your feet so that those who are weak and lame will not fall but become strong.



Tough Questions

- **So what do we have? We see a God who is gracious enough to save us, but not one who can be taken for granted and ignored.**
- **The fact that one of three Persons of the Godhead has the name Father is no accident. (being born again is not just a convenient analogy)**
- **When the prodigal son was ready to come back home and live under His father's rules, he was welcomed back into the family by his father.**



Tough Questions

- **The “seventy times seven” reference Jesus used was not to put a limit on forgiveness, but to show that there were no limits to forgiveness to the one who seeks it.**
- **When one is concerned about “cheapening grace” that same one ought not to worry about cheapening grace precisely because he is concerned.**
- **It is the one who assumes that God must put up with whatever we do who ought to be concerned.**



Tough Questions

- **For all who struggle on a daily basis with sin – you are anything but alone, we all struggle.**
- **Rejoice that a battle exists because that in itself is evidence of two natures – else there would be no struggle.**



Tough Questions

- **Heb 10:26** Dear friends, if we deliberately continue sinning after we have received knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice that will cover these sins. **27** There is only the terrible expectation of God's judgment and the raging fire that will consume his enemies. **28** For anyone who refused to obey the law of Moses was put to death without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. **29** Just think how much worse the punishment will be for those who have trampled on the Son of God, and have treated the blood of the covenant, which made us holy, as if it were common and unholy, and have insulted and disdained the Holy Spirit who brings God's mercy to us.