

Learning about Universal Salvation

Commentary for October 1, 2019 — How I Studied and Learned

Read the "[October 2019 Newsletter](#)." It introduces this month's article, "Your Role in the Creation of God." It will help you learn about your personal future with God, Christ, and all the fellow children of Adam who will become believers in Christ's life, death, resurrection, and glorification. All that was done on our behalf for our eventual becoming Children of God. Almost unbelievable, Scripture tells what our future will be. We shall see Christ as He is, and we shall see God our Father and look at His face.

We first must die (death being the last enemy), then we who believe in Christ at death will be resurrected to glory at Christ's return. Some of you may be affected strongly by this article, perhaps weep for joy, relief, and anticipation of God's gift of His future glory that is sealed with His promise. I also hope you receive the gift available for each of us NOW — a peace in your heart that will greatly help you endure the evils and pains of life. Ask and receive ...

"Do not worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, that is superior to every frame of mind, shall be garrisoning your hearts and your apprehensions in Christ Jesus."

• *Philippians 4:6–7 Concordant Literal Version*

My Learning about Universal Salvation,

I was first told about biblical teaching of universal salvation from a friend of mine 45 years ago. He knew nothing about the teaching, but he "knew" it was true. I rejected it, of course. It sounded absurd to me. At that time I believed in the doctrine called "annihilationism."

"Annihilationism is the doctrine that the souls of the wicked will be snuffed out of existence rather than be sent to an everlasting, conscious hell. The existence of the unrepentant will be extinguished, while the righteous will enter into everlasting bliss."¹

• *"Annihilationism," Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, 22*

The religious organization I belonged to then, taught that all people not resurrected at Christ's return would undergo a physical resurrection and go through correction and education during the period of the Great White Throne judgment. (So far, the teaching is biblically correct. Then comes the error). Most, not all people would accept God and Christ and be resurrected to glory.

A very small number of people, we were told, would totally rebel and by exercising their fully informed "free will," would strongly reject God's love and lordship over their lives. God will

¹ Norman L. Geisler, "Annihilationism," *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 22. It is also called "conditional immortality."

judge them a second time, and condemn them with death again. They would not suffer in a burning hell fire of eternal agony and pain. Instead, they would go into the lake of fire. Their bodies would burn quickly in a nearly instantaneous death. They would cease to exist as if they had never been born. I was taught this was a merciful end for hardcore unrepentant sinners. It would give them what they desired.

They supposedly freely choose nonexistence rather than to submit to God and receive His love, Christ's love, and receive the love of their fellow then-glorified children of God. I thought it was a proven biblical teaching. Logically, I thought it was elegant as being a reverse of creation and God honoring the free will of His creatures.

God the Failure?

In that scenario, God failed by His own standards, not accomplishing His stated WILL:

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time [own eras]."

• **1 Timothy 2:3–6**

As I note in this month's article, God's will is supreme. Your will in the matter of salvation has no power. God's will can be resisted, but not thwarted. God **"will have all men to be saved,"** just as He will accomplish **"all things after the counsel of his own will"** in creation:

"That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he [God the Father] might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will."

• **Ephesians 1:10-11**

God's counsel cannot be thwarted. Paul tells us God's **"counsel"** is "immutable":

"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie ..."

• **Hebrews 6:17–18**

What does the word immutable means? Here are some synonyms. Read them into verse 17:

"Unchallengeable, absolute, unassailable, incontrovertible, undisputable, undeniable, final, unalterable, unchangeable (unchanging), permanent, irretrievable, fixed, [and] binding." [Get the point?]

• **"immutable," Merriam-Webster Thesaurus**

I learned that truth about universal salvation when I came across Dr. Martin's teachings in 1975. Like many of you back then (and even today), I devoured all I could of Dr. Martin's information from the Foundation for Biblical Research (FBR). When he left FBR and started ASK He continued to update his research, and I continue to do the same.

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