

I. Introduction

- A. Today, I'm wrapping up the Grill Bill series and so many of you have sent in questions. Thank you for them. Let's get right into it today.

II. Questions

- A. Is it possible to lose your salvation?
1. There is one way to lose your salvation, and I'll get to it in a minute.
 2. I want to say that this is one of those areas where reasonable Christians disagree. That's okay—they can be wrong.
 3. This topic has a couple of names, like:
 - a) Once saved, always saved (OSAS), and
 - b) The Perseverance of the Saints (a Calvinist name)
 - c) My favorite name is the doctrine of Eternal Security.
 4. I believe in Eternal Security. That means that once you receive salvation, God himself bears ALL the burden to keep you saved. You are secure forever.
 5. When you received Jesus, a whole lot of changes happened, and God will never undo them.
 - a) God adopted you. Will God ever kick a kid out of his family? (Luke 15:11-32)
 - b) God erased your sins. Will he ever rub your nose in them again? (Ps 103:12)
 - c) God joined you to Jesus Christ, so you have a new name, a new identity, and a new nature—to God you look like Jesus. Will he ever rip you apart from Him? (2 Cor 5:17).
 - d) God came to live in you by His Spirit. Will he ever leave you or abandon you? (Heb 13:5).
 - e) God justified you, which means he declared you acceptable and righteous before the Supreme Court of Heaven. Who can condemn you or bring a charge against you?

(1) Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is He who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us (Romans 8:33, 34, NKJV).
 6. From every angle you look at it, salvation is permanent. It is a gift that keeps on giving. It is once for all, forever and ever and ever.
 7. No, you can't lose it; except for one condition: here it is:
 - a) *25 Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them (Hebrews 7:25, NKJV).*
 8. Uttermost = take the word for "all" and tack it onto the word for "completely." Jesus has the power to save you once and forever. If you came to God through Jesus, he saved you once and forever—all, entirely, completely, and to the uttermost.
 9. Why can we say that?
 10. "Since he always lives to make intercession" for you. This means he is your advocate in heaven.
 11. I said there is one condition under which you could lose your salvation. Here it is: If Jesus Christ, sitting on the throne of glory, up in heaven, before the angels, at the right hand of His Father—if he keeled over and dropped dead you would lose your salvation.
 12. And that will NEVER happen—as long as He lives, you're in.
- B. I'm not sure how to word this question. If God created ALL THINGS, does that mean He created the opposites of everything He is—goodness, justice, righteousness, holiness, etc.? If He didn't create it, how did it come into existence? I know because of the fall, but if He didn't create those characteristics, how do they exist?
1. If God created all things, and evil is a thing, then God created evil. That's the logic of so many people, and that's why I really appreciate this question. It's confusing.
 2. The authors of the Bible all read from the same script when they wrote. They are careful to affirm two realities:
 - a) Reality 1: Evil exists.
 - b) Reality 2: God did not create it.
 3. Relevant Scripture:
 - a) *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone (James 1:13, NKJV).*
 - b) *You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on wickedness... (Habakkuk 1:13, NKJV).*
 4. Evil exists. God did not create it. So who did?
 5. We need to define evil first. Evil is not a thing, like a shirt or a tree. It is a corruption of a thing, like a moth hole in a shirt, or rot in a tree.
 6. Here's how one philosopher says it:

- a) “[E]vil is not a thing or substance. Rather it is a lack or privation of a good thing that God made. Evil is a deprivation of some particular good.
 - b) Evil is not a substance but a corruption of the good substances God made. Evil is like rust to a car or rot to a tree. It is a lack of good things, but it is not a thing in itself. Evil is like a wound in an arm or moth-holes in a garment. It exists only in another but not in itself.”
 - (1) (Norman Geisler, “The Problem of Evil, part 2” at www.ankerburg.org [an excellent apologetics site.]
 7. That doesn’t mean evil isn’t real, as Buddhism teaches. Evil is real. It is a real corruption introduced into God’s good creation by free will beings like us.
 8. It’s like saying God created shoelaces, but we’re the ones who tied them into a hopelessly stuck knot.
 9. Thank God for Jesus, because he is able to untie the stickiest knot. And one day, God will park evil in a faraway place, and balance the scales of justice forever.
- c. Is there a real Holy Grail? That is out there waiting to be found? Or is it more of a symbol for people?
1. I like this question, because there’s a lot of hype around things like the Holy Grail and the Ark of the Covenant.
 2. The Holy Grail is the name for a special cup; the one Jesus drank from at His last supper with His followers.
 3. Nobody knows where that cup went. It has probably disintegrated by now and even if it hasn’t, how could anybody prove that they have the right cup?
 4. The best thing for us to do is to focus on stuff we can be sure of and that’s why God gave us our Bibles. Let’s focus on that.
 5. Here’s a warning from the Bible, and I’m not saying this about this particular question, I’m saying this about all the stuff that can distract us from the main thing, which is knowing God through His Word. Here’s the warning.
 - a) *3 For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to right teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever they want to hear. 4 They will reject the truth and follow strange myths (2 Timothy 4:3, 4, NLT).*
 6. Let’s follow the Bible, and not get caught up in strange myths like the Holy Grail.
- d. How do we try to continue on even when we feel completely defeated???
1. Wow. This question is so raw and real and painful. Most of us have felt this exact question at some time in our lives, haven’t we?
 2. We have to look at Jesus—people mistreated him. They told lies about Him. They made Him into something He was not. They attacked Him, hated Him, beat Him bloody, convicted Him on false charges, tortured Him, and nailed Him to the Cross.
 3. That’s about as close to bottoming out as you can get. So here’s what Jesus did.
 - a) First, He created community. He brought his friends together. He asked them to hang with Him and to pray with Him. He asked for support, and I encourage you to do that too; our small groups and GrowU are a great way to create community.
 - b) A second thing Jesus did when he was low was to pray.
 - (1) *“Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done” (Luke 22:42, NKJV).*
 - (2) And I encourage you to pray too.
 - c) And then Jesus trusted Himself to His Father and His will. He said, “Into your hands I commit my spirit.” That’s like saying, God, you’re my father, and I trust you with everything and even the pain that comes into my life is something you can work through to bless me and to bless the world through me. You have to trust your life over to the Father.
 4. There’s one more thing we can all do and this is really important, especially if you’re feeling good right now. You need to use the good times to prepare for the tough times; when things are going well, that’s when you tighten up your life with God—prayer, the Word, service, and community.
 5. You know that game show, Survivor? If you knew that in 12 months you’d compete on that show, how would you spend the next 12 months? Wouldn’t you prepare? Work out? Get strong? Pack on weight and muscle? Learn how to start a fire without a match? Study what kind of bugs you could eat?
 6. You would prepare yourself. Jesus did. He was prepared, spiritually, for the dark days of the Cross and that’s my prayer for each of us.
- e. What role does quantum physics, the energetic state of our being and the energy state of God hold in the Christian faith?
1. Some of you may chuckle at this question, but not me. I love it. I think it’s cool. We are looking at the basic building blocks of reality and how they intersect with us and with God.

2. One of the creators of quantum physics declared, "Nobody understands quantum physics."
 3. So, let's not try to understand it, but here is a simple brief description from a book called Quantum Enigma:
 - a) "Quantum theory tells that all things that have ever interacted are forever connected. For example, your friend's freely made decision of what to do in Moscow can instantaneously influence what you find in Manhattan. And this happens without any physical force being involved. Einstein called such influences 'spooky actions.'"
 - (1) Quantum Enigma, by Bruce Rosenblum and Fred Kuttner, at <http://www.quantumenigma.com>
 4. So, there's some kind of invisible force field that connects everything with everything else all the time, and when you study it, it kind of studies you back.
 5. One of the smartest minds since Einstein is a guy named Steven Hawking. He said that when somebody brings up quantum physics he reaches for his gun. It's that annoying.
 6. I'm glad he's not here, though I've been told by a pastor from England that Steven Hawking began attending a small Baptist church in England. I think that's very cool.
 7. And that should establish my geek credentials forever.
 8. Back in the days of Jesus, the Greek and Roman philosophers were really hitting their stride. Platonic and Stoic philosophers taught that there is a mind, a rationality, behind the universe that holds it together. This mind or rationality explains the order of nature. It also explains our ability to think and reason.
 - a) Those philosophers had a name for the universe: the all things (ta panta, in Greek)
 - b) They had a name for the mind that holds together the universe: Logos, in Greek. Logos means "word."
 - c) And they had a name for how the Logos became the glue that held together the universe and everything in it: consists of the Greek word sunistemi.
 9. They didn't understand quantum mechanics 2000 years ago, but the table was already set by super-smart philosophers.
 10. Then along comes super-smart St Paul. He wrote these words about Jesus:
 - a) *And He is before all things [the universe, ta panta], and in Him all things [the universe and everything in it] consist [sunistemi, held together and made rational] (Colossians 1:17, NKJV).*
 - (1) Heb 1:3 makes a similar claim, that Jesus "upholds the universe by his power."
 11. Paul used the same philosophical terms the brightest people of his day were using. And he said, "Guess what?" I know the guy who does all that stuff. His name is Jesus. He pre-existed the universe because he made the universe, and now he holds the universe together, subatomic particle by subatomic particle.
 12. Which to me is saying that the deeper cosmologists peer into the building blocks of reality, the more they will see the face of God smiling back at them. And you know what He's saying?
 13. Peek-a-boo.
- F. What day is the Sabbath really, Saturday or Sunday?
1. The Sabbath day is Saturday, and it starts at sundown on Friday. The Jews observe worship and rest on the Sabbath.
 2. So did the early Christians. They were mostly Jews, and Jesus was a Jew, and they saw themselves as the completion of everything the Jewish Bible taught.
 3. Later, they shifted from meeting on the Sabbath day to meeting on Sunday. That's the first day of the week.
 4. Why?
 5. Because that's the day Jesus rose from the dead. Very early in church history, the Bible mentions that Christians had their main gathering on Sunday, the first day of the week (1 Cor 16:2).
 6. The truth is this: the very best, official day to worship God is always going to be—Saturday.
 7. And Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday too. Every day is the Lord's Day, and every day is resurrection day. So let's not make a big deal about it. That's what the Bible says here:
 - a) *16 So don't let anyone condemn you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating certain holy days or new-moon ceremonies or Sabbaths. 17 For these rules were only shadows of the real thing, Christ himself (Colossians 2:16, 17, NLT).*
- G. Ok, so I'm saved, now what? Do I open the Bible and read it and if so where do I start and secondly, prayer. Is there a proper format to doing so?
- H. Dear Bill, I have taken your advice and have been reading my Bible every day. I am a man, I can't skip a day or I'll forget all the time. I started by reading just a little each day and have almost completed the New Testament and decided to read Genesis. I am so confused by it sometimes it read like a good sci-fi, but no matter what it

confuses me. I understand I am not a scholar, but sometimes I get the feeling that God wasn't sure about us when He created us and sometimes He sounds like He is talking to others and I don't think it could just be Christ and the Holy Spirit. Can you help me or do I just keep wondering about God's plan and God's purpose? Thanks.

1. Awesome, awesome, fun, cool questions. Thank you for sending them in.
2. I love that you guys/gals are getting into the Bible, even if it's confusing.
3. The Bible isn't just one book. It is 66 books bound into one volume. Each book tells part of one long story. That story begins before creation, arcs through all of world history, and the drama of redemption, to a super glorious finish with fireworks that dazzle the angels.
4. We are born, live, and die, as interconnected subplots in God's grand drama.
5. All 66 books are written from the same script, so to speak—the mind of God by his Spirit.
6. Here's the difficulty: it takes a while for the Bible's big story to come together in your consciousness. It feels like collecting pieces of puzzle without the box top.
7. So the first encouragement I would give is this one: be patient. And the second encouragement is staying steady. Don't give up on your Bible. It is food for your soul.
8. You ask for a proper format and I'm going to give you one. But I'm also going to say that ANY format that gets you to read the Bible and to pray is a good format. So here's one suggestion:

a) Bible:

- (1) MORNING: Start with the book of John (not 1 John, 2 John or 3 John, but John or St John). Read 1 chapter each day. As you read, underline the word believe, belief, or faith every time you see it. When you're done, go to the book of Romans and do the same thing.

(a) (If you have the discipline, do this too...)

- (2) EVENING: Read 1 chapter from the book of Proverbs. It has 31 chapters, so go by the date. Today is the 24th, so read Proverbs 24. Do that over and over for 3 months.

b) Prayer: Here's a simple format called ACTS

- (1) ADORATION: tell God at least one reason why He's worthy of your love and devotion.
- (2) CONFESSION: tell God about the stuff that you feel bad about, confess your sins.
- (3) THANKSGIVING: tell God five or six things you're thankful for.
- (4) SEEK/SUPPLICATION: tell God what you need and what you want.

I. Would God prefer it if you slept at your house, or at church?

1. There's a cool story about that in the Bible:

a) *7 On the first day of the week, we gathered to observe the Lord's Supper. Paul was preaching; and since he was leaving the next day, he talked until midnight. 8 The upstairs room where we met was lighted with many flickering lamps. 9 As Paul spoke on and on, a young man named Eutychus, sitting on the windowsill, became very drowsy. Finally, he sank into a deep sleep...*

2. Let's pause here for a second. I don't mind if you fall asleep, just don't sit right in front of me, and just don't snore.

3. And be super careful that you don't do what Eutychus did. He sank into a deep sleep...

a) *"...and fell three stories to his death below. 10 Paul went down, bent over him, and took him into his arms. "Don't worry," he said, "he's alive!" 11 Then they all went back upstairs and ate the Lord's Supper together. And Paul continued talking to them until dawn; then he left. 12 Meanwhile, the young man was taken home unhurt, and everyone was greatly relieved (Acts 20:7-12, NLT).*

4. I have fallen asleep on much better preachers than myself, so I can't take too much offense.

III. Conclusion

- A. And that's where we'll stop.
- B. Except to say thank you for your awesome questions, and to invite you to our next Grow U on May 16. You can sign up today, because we come together in a community to eat and grow together, like a team.
- C. And one of the classes is called What's Next, and it helps map out the first steps in your journey with Jesus. One Sunday afternoon and evening. Be there!