

Common Objections



COMMON OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED

In this booklet 19 common objections to free-will and conditional salvation will be considered.

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OBJECTION #1: A loving earthly father would not destroy his son. How could the loving Heavenly Father destroy one of His children in hell? (Doctrine of Predestination, Boettner, 183)

Reply:

- 1) God did call upon earthly fathers to destroy their disobedient children.

Deuteronomy 21:18-21

18 "If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them,

19 then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, to the gate of his city.

20 And they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.'

21 Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones; so you shall put away the evil from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear.

- 2) If God's love would keep Him from sending one of His children to hell, His love would prevent Him from sending a lost sinner to hell.

John 3:16

16 For *God so loved the world* that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

OBJECTION #2: A child of God can no more lose his sonship than an earthly son could lose his sonship to an earthly father.
(Doctrine of Predestination, Boettner, 184)

Reply:

- 1) Children can be disinherited.

Numbers 14:12

12 [God told Moses] I will strike them with the pestilence and *disinherit* them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they."

- 2) If this objection is true, reverse it and see if it works on sinners:

A sinner can no more lose his sonship to his father the Devil than an earthly son could lose his sonship to an earthly father.

Does anyone believe that?

- If a child of the Devil can change his sonship, then a child of God can also change his sonship.
- If a child of the Devil changes his sonship by obedience, a child of God changes his sonship by disobedience.

Hebrews 3:12

12 Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you *an evil heart of unbelief* in departing from the living God;

1 John 3:7-10

7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.

8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

10 *In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God*, nor is he who does not love his brother.

OBJECTION #3: Insecurity – One never knows for certain he is saved. One lives in constant dread of falling away and being forever lost. (Doctrine of Predestination, Boettner, 193-195)

Reply:

- 1) Suppose people do live in fear (Mt 10:28). Does this prove Once-Saved-Always-Saved is true?

The Christian's faith must be based on the word of God (Rom 10:17), not human logic (1 Cor 2:5).

- 2) The Christian can have assurance of his salvation:

1 John 2:3-5

3 Now by *this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.*

4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. *By this we know that we are in Him.*

3) If the Christian sins, he can be assured of being forgiven:

1 John 1:7-9

7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Salvation is conditional from start to finish. God made the rules no matter how unsettling it may seem.

OBJECTION #4: Ps 37:24 – "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down." If a child of God cannot be utterly cast down, he can never be lost. (Bogard-Warlick Debate, Bogard, 123)

Reply:

1) The "fall" described here is assumed to be "sin." This must be proven.

The context indicates the "fall" under consideration is the upright being mistreated by the wicked:

Psalms 37:14

14 The wicked have drawn the sword
And have bent their bow,
To *cast down the poor and needy*,
To *slay those who are of upright conduct*.

The assurance of v24 is that even though bad things happen to good people in this life, eventually God will vindicate the innocent.

Verse 24 is not speaking of one who sins, but one who "falls" in the sense of being abused in this life.

2) This very psalm cautions people to cease doing evil.

Psalms 37:27

27 Depart from evil, and do good;
And dwell forevermore.

Q: If one refuses to meet the conditions, can he expect the Lord to save him anyway?

All of the scriptures affirm salvation is conditional from start to finish.

OBJECTION #5: Mt 7:22-23 – Jesus will say, "I never knew you." He could not say this if someone was once saved and then fell away. (Doctrine of Predestination, Boettner, 191)

Reply:

- 1) This passage is speaking about specific people – not describing every lost person on Judgment Day.

Matthew 25:11-12

11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!'

12 But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, *I do not know you.*'

Does, "I do not know you," allow for people who have fallen away?

OBJECTION #6: Mt 24:24 – "To deceive *if possible*, even the elect." This passage actually teaches it is impossible for one of the elect to be deceived and lost. (Doctrine of Predestination, Boettner, 198)

Reply:

- 1) This argument is saying Christians cannot be deceived.

This is a misuse of the passage. Christians can be deceived.

1 John 1:8

8 If we say that we have no sin, *we deceive ourselves*, and the truth is not in us.

The "we" of this passage are true believers.

1 John 3:7

7 Little children, *let no one deceive you*. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.

This passage admits the possibility of true disciples being deceived.

- 2) The word "possible" means the thing under consideration is "possible."

Romans 12:18

18 *If* it is *possible*, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

This admits of a possibility of occurrence. It is not a guarantee, but a possibility.

ILL: A wife may say to her husband, "*If possible*, be home by 5:00 tonight." This is a possibility, but no guarantee.

This argument is saying: "possible" means "impossible." That makes the argument invalid.

OBJECTION #7: Jn 3:36 – "He who believes on the Son has everlasting life." Unless that which is everlasting shall come to an end, a Christian cannot be lost. (Bogard-Warlick Debate, Bogard, 123)

Reply:

- 1) Turn the argument around and consider the unbeliever:

John 3:36

36 ... *he who does not believe* the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

If the believer can never become lost, can the unbeliever ever become saved? Of course he can.

- 2) People can change their destiny.
 - The unbeliever can stop being an unbeliever and become a believer (Acts 16:31). When he does this, he no longer faces the wrath of God.
 - The believer can stop believing and become an unbeliever (Heb 3:12). When he does this he forfeits all the blessings and privileges of a believer.

OBJECTION #8: Jn 6:47 – He who hears My word has eternal life. If that life can end, it is not really eternal. (Doctrine of Predestination, Boettner, 197)

Reply:

- 1) This passage means the believer has eternal life in prospect.

Romans 4:17

17 ... God, ... gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;

It is "as good as done" as far as God is concerned. Believers are going to have eternal life.

- 2) In actuality the Christian has a hope of eternal life.

Titus 1:2

2 in *hope of eternal life* which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,

Titus 3:7

7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to *the hope of eternal life*.

When people have hope, they do not actually have what they are hoping for:

Romans 8:24

24 For we were saved in this hope, but *hope that is seen is not hope*; for why does one still hope for what he sees?

Mark 10:28-30

28 Then Peter began to say to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You."

29 So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's,

30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time — houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions — and *in the age to come, eternal life*.

OBJECTION #9: Jn 10:5 – "A stranger they will not follow ... for they do not know the voice of strangers." How, then, can anyone say a true disciple will follow the Devil to ruin? (Bogard-Warlick Debate, Bogard, 123)

Reply:

1) Can a Christian sin?

This argument is saying if a one is a true disciple, he can never be tempted by the Devil to sin – for if he did sin, he would be "listening to the voice of a stranger."

- If a Christian can sin, the above argument is misusing Jn 10:5.
- According to 1 Jn 2:1-2 a Christian can sin.

- Therefore, the above argument is misusing Jn 10:5.

2) Can sheep stop following the shepherd?

If a sheep cannot stop following the shepherd, how does one explain the parable of the "lost sheep" (Lk 15:3-7).

3) Jn 10:5 is describing characteristics of the Lord's disciples. It is not discussing whether a disciple can quit.

ILL: One could say, "Marines are brave, obedient and respectful people." That would be a true statement. But this does not say anything about whether a Marine could quit being a Marine.

The fallacy of the above argument is: *Viewing one passage in isolation from all other passages which speak to the same subject.*

Other passages discuss the fact that disciples can certainly quit.

John 6:66

66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

OBJECTION #10: Jn 10:28 – "No one is able to snatch them out of My hand." Therefore, a Christian cannot be eternally lost. (Doctrine of Predestination, Boettner, 197-198)

Reply:

- 1) This passage speaks of God's faithfulness to guard His faithful people.

- 2) The people who are classified as "sheep" in this passage have two qualities:
 - They listen to what the Lord says (v27).
 - They follow (obey) what the Lord says (v27).

People who do these two things do not have to worry. No one can snatch them from God's hand.

This passage proves salvation is conditional – based on people hearing and following the Lord.

It does not address the topic of people becoming unfaithful.

OBJECTION #11: Jn 10:28 – "Perish" is in the middle voice and means, "They shall never cause themselves to perish." (Bogard-Warlick Debate, Bogard, 123)

Reply:

- 1) There are three basic kinds of middle voice:
 - Reflexive middle – e.g. "The man is raising himself up."
 - Intensive middle – e.g. "He himself is teaching the truth."

- Reciprocal middle – e.g. "The men are teaching one another." (Essentials of NT Greek, Summers, 38-39)

This present argument is saying the middle voice being used in Jn 10:28 is the reflexive middle and means: "The sheep shall never cause themselves to perish." However, no Bible translation renders the passage as a reflexive middle.

2) This is an intensive middle.

All Bible translations render this as an intensive middle ("By no means will they ever perish").

OBJECTION #12: Rom 4:8 – "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin." How can a Christian be lost if his sins are not imputed to him? (Bogard-Warlick Debate, Bogard, 123)

Reply:

1) Rom 4:8 is speaking about past sins.

When one obeys the gospel, his past sins are washed away (Acts 22:16).

2) If all future sins are forgiven, why confess and pray in the future when sins are committed?

1 John 1:8-9

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to

forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

OBJECTION #13: Rom 6:14 – "sin shall not have dominion over you." If a man could fall from grace, sin would have dominion over him. Since sin cannot have dominion over a Christian, he can never fall from grace and be lost. ([Bogard-Warlick Debate](#), Bogard, 123-124)

Reply:

- 1) This argument ignores the context.

According to Rom 6, salvation is conditional.

Romans 6:12-13

12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

If one meets these conditions, then sin shall not have dominion over them.

- 2) According to this chapter, men retain their free-will and salvation is conditional.

Romans 6:16

16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

A Christian may exercise free-will and choose to present himself as a slave of sin leading to eternal death. Receiving eternal life is conditioned on making the right choice.

OBJECTION #14: Rom 6:14 – A Christian is "not under law." Therefore, they cannot be condemned for violating the law. (Doctrine of Predestination, Boettner, 184)

Reply:

- 1) This argument is saying Christians are not under law in any sense whatsoever.

If Christians are not "under law" in any sense whatsoever, they simply cannot sin – at all in any sense.

1 John 3:4

4 ... sin is the transgression of the law.

But Christians can commit sin:

1 John 2:1

1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

An "Advocate" is a lawyer. If a Christian cannot sin, he does not need a lawyer.

- 2) Rom 6:14 cannot possibly mean Christians are not under law in any sense whatsoever because of the following passages:

The first passage comes before Rom 6:14:

Romans 3:27

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by *the law of faith*.

The second passage comes after Rom 6:14:

Romans 8:2

2 For *the law of the Spirit of life* in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Both of these passages are in the context of Rom 6:14. Whatever Rom 6:14 means, it does not mean a Christian is not under any law in any sense whatsoever – because before and after Paul wrote Rom 6:14 he said Christians are under the "*law of faith*" and the "*law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*."

Also, notice the following passages:

1 Corinthians 9:21

21 to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but *under law toward Christ*), that I might win those who are without law;

Galatians 6:2

2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill *the law of Christ*.

James 1:25

25 But he who looks into *the perfect law of liberty* and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

James 2:12

12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by *the law of liberty*.

Clearly, Christians are under law in some sense.

3) Rom 6:14 means we are not under law as the basis of our justification.

Men can be justified one of two ways:

- Based on law
- Based on grace

To be saved based on law – means one rejects any offer of pardon and wants to stand before God based on how he has kept the law. To be justified like this one must keep the law perfectly.

To be saved based on grace – means one trusts in God and does whatever God said to receive His grace.

- If God said, "*Believe on My Son*" (Jn 3:16), then one hoping to be saved will believe on Jesus.

- If God said, "*Repent of your sins*" (Lk 13:3), then one hoping to be saved will repent.
- If God said, "*Confess My Son with your mouth*" (Rom 10:10), then one hoping to be saved will confess Jesus verbally.
- If God said, "*Be baptized for the remission of sins*" (Acts 2:38), then one hoping to be saved will be baptized.

God's law is involved in being saved by grace, but it is not the basis of salvation. Jesus' blood is the basis of salvation (Mt 26:28). God's law states the conditions which must be met in order to receive forgiveness thru that blood (Heb 5:8-9).

OBJECTION #15: Rom 8:38-39 – Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Therefore a Christian cannot be eternally lost. (Bogard-Warlick Debate, Bogard, 123)

Reply:

1) Rom 8:35-39 is discussing outside forces.

Look at each element described in Rom 8:38-39 and it becomes evident these are forces from outside the Christian.

If a person wishes to stay united with God, there is no outside force which can separate him from God.

2) People can separate themselves from God's love.

John 15:9-10

9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

Jude 21

21 keep yourselves in the love of God, ...

If a saved person cannot separate himself from God's love, why these commands and warnings?

OBJECTION #16: 1 Cor 3:12-15 – The life work of many people will be burned ... but they themselves shall be saved.
(*Doctrine of Predestination*, Boettner, 188)

Reply:

1) The topic of 1 Cor 3:12-15 personal evangelism.

1 Corinthians 3:6

6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.

Each Christian should be busy trying to convert others to Christ.

- Each one doing personal evangelism must be careful how he converts others (v10).
- The only foundation upon which to convert someone is Jesus Christ Himself (v11).

- Some people converted will be like gold, silver or precious stones – able to survive the fires of persecution (v12).
- Others converted will be like wood, hay or straw – unable to survive the fires of persecution (v12).
- If one's converts survive the fires of persecution, the one who evangelized will "receive a reward" (v14).

1 Corinthians 3:15

15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

- The person evangelizing others must himself endure the hardships of persecution.
- If he himself passes thru the fire faithfully, he too will be saved in heaven.

Rather than teaching unconditional salvation, this passage teaches just the opposite.

NOTE: Some churches lure people with fun, games, food, "financial assistance." When persecution comes, people will not give their lives for a cappuccino.

Christians must make sure people are being converted to Christ (v11) rather than fun and games.

OBJECTION #17: 1 Pet 1:5 – Christians are "kept by the power of God" and cannot fall from grace. (Bogard-Warlick Debate, Bogard, 124)

Reply:

- 1) This arguments ignores the last part of the verse:

1 Peter 1:5

5 who are kept by the power of God *through faith* for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

If one stops having faith (Heb 3:12), he is no longer assured of his salvation.

This passage does not prove:

- Salvation is unconditional after conversion.
- One loses free-will after conversion.

OBJECTION #18: 1 Jn 2:19 – They went out from us. Those who leave Christ were never really converted to begin with. (Doctrine of Predestination, Boettner, 190-191)

Reply:

- 1) This passage is speaking about a specific instance – not describing the case of every single person who leaves the Lord.

2 Peter 2:20-21

20 For if, *after they have escaped the pollutions of the world* through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.

21 For it would have been better for them not *to have known the way of righteousness*, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

These people are described as:

- "have escaped the pollutions of the world"
- "have known the way of righteousness"

"again entangled " – If they were never saved to begin with, they could not be entangled "again."

"the latter end ... the beginning" – If they were never actually saved, they were lost all along. There would be no "latter end" to contrast with "the beginning."

2) What about Adam and Eve?

- Were they "truly saved" in the beginning?
- Since they fell away, does this mean they must not have been "good" to begin with? (Surely not.)

3) What about the angels who sinned? (2 Pet 2:4).

- Were they "truly saved" in heaven to begin with?
- Perhaps their "falling away" meant they were devils all along from the moment God created them. (Surely not.)

OBJECTION #19: 1 Jn 3:3 – "Every man that has this hope in him purifies himself even as He is pure." If this is true, there are none left to pollute themselves so as to be lost. (Bogard-Warlick Debate, Bogard, 124)

Reply:

1) This argument is assuming what must be proven.

It assumes since every sincere believer is busy "purifying himself," he cannot stop the process and become lost. This must be proven.

2) The believer can stop purifying himself.

He retains free-will and can cease purifying himself and cease following the Lord.

Hebrews 12:14-15

14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this *many become defiled*;

3) This passage demonstrates salvation is conditional.

To stay saved the believer must purify himself.

OBJECTION #20: Kill the new convert – The only way to make sure someone is saved is to kill them right after you baptize them. (Common argument from private discussions.)

Reply:

1) What about babies?

Would anyone reason that it would be best to kill babies as soon as they are born to make sure they never fall away and become lost?

2) What about unsaved people? Should God have never created them to begin with?

- If it's argued that God created lost people and send them to hell for His glory (Calvinism),
- Then why not argue that God caused some Christians to be lost for His glory?

- If a sinner being lost glorifies God, why wouldn't the Christian being lost do the same thing?

3) This objection is based on the idea that the ultimate, most important thing in life is to be saved.

This makes the salvation of men completely man-centered.

4) The chief thing is for God to be praised.

Everything is suppose to be God-centered.

Mark 12:29-31 (NKJV)

29 *Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one.*

30 *And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.*

31 *And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."*

The first and foremost command is to love God – He is first.
Neighbors are second.
I am third.

If I get baptized and then request to be killed immediately thereafter, I'm putting myself first rather than God.

God is to be praised and dead people cannot praise Him:

Psalms 115:17 (NKJV)

17 *The dead do not praise the LORD,
Nor any who go down into silence.*

Therefore: NO, it would not be best to kill someone immediately after they are baptized.

- They must live to praise God – for He is worthy (Rev 4:11).
- They must bring others to salvation – in order that they might give glory to God also.

Dead men cannot evangelize others (Lk 16:31).

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