

## Bible Study on Hermeneutics – Handout Session 11

Controversial Doctrines, Practices, and Passages

Grace Bible Chapel

December 6th 2009

Pastor/Teacher Jim Bryant

### The Lordship Salvation Controversy – continued from Handout 10

There are two main views of the nature of saved man that are associated with the Lordship controversy. These views seek to explain why man after he is saved, continues to sin. Both groups are considered evangelicals. One group says that God gives the Christian a “new nature,” but the Christian also retains the “old nature.” Therefore the Christian is sometimes working from his “new nature” and sometimes from his “old nature.” The second group says – no God at the new birth gives man a new nature. His problem is that it is packaged in a body of sin, in an environment of sin and temptation, and there is also a problem of immaturity.

#### **The Scriptures primarily used to support the two natures:**

- Rom 7:13-25
- Gal 5:16-18
- Eph 4:17 – 5:20; Col 3:5-17
- Gal 3:3; Phil 3:3; Rom 6:11-13

#### **The Scriptures primarily used to support the one “new nature”:**

- 2 Cor 5:17
- Ez 36:25-27
- Eph 2:3; 2 Pet 1:4; Gal 2:20; Rom 6:13; Col 3:9-10
- Gal 3:3; Phil 3:3; Rom 6:11-13
- 2 Pet 2:22

#### **Comparing commentaries on 1<sup>st</sup> John to show the difference in the “Lordship view” vs. the “Free Grace” view.**

- How do “Free Grace Theology” advocates deal with 1<sup>st</sup> John? In Zane Hodges commentary on 1<sup>st</sup> John he describes the purpose of the letter “It warns against the dangers of false teaching and exhorts believers to lives of obedience to God and love for their brothers and sisters.” Writing about 1 John 1:3 “*what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.*” Hodges commentary says the following: “The objective John had in mind in writing about these significant realities was that you, the readers, may have fellowship with us, the apostles. Since he later, in 2:12-14, made it perfectly clear that he regarded the readers as genuine Christians, his goal was obviously not their conversions. It is an interpretive mistake of considerable moment to treat the term ‘fellowship’ as though it meant little more than to be a Christian. The readers were already saved, but they needed this letter if they were to enjoy real fellowship with the apostolic circle to which the author belonged.”
- From my own commentary by comparison I have written: “1<sup>st</sup> John is about reality – how can one know they have eternal life? Many people profess to be Christians but are not. The epistle of 1<sup>st</sup> John provides the answer to the genuineness of any persons salvation by providing contrasts based on the reality of the evidence of true salvation (eternal life) in the recipient, as compared with the evidence of the unsaved. For the reader it is as though they are taking a self-evaluation with eternal consequences (1 John 5:13).” MacArthur has written: “The apostle John also wrote an entire epistle about the marks of a true believer (1 John 5:13). To those struggling with assurance, he did not counsel them to pin their hopes on a past incident or a moment of faith. He gave instead a doctrinal test and moral test, and reiterated them throughout his first epistle.

- From my own commentary on 1 John 1:3 by comparison I have written: “In having this fellowship it means that those sharing fellowship with the Godhead have the righteousness of Christ (for God cannot associate with wickedness) and the same holy desires. Those in fellowship love what He loves. This means practically that God is not a stranger, and the person in this fellowship wants to be in His presence because his nature has been made likened unto God’s nature. It is therefore impossible for someone who does not love God, and does not like the same things God likes to have fellowship with Him.”
- 1 John 2:9 as an example: *“The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now.”* Hodge says in his commentary: “If John thought that no Christian could hate another Christian, there was no need to personalize the word ‘his.’ But, the opinion, held by some that a true Christian could never hate another Christian is naïve and contrary to the Bible and experience. Even so great a man as king David was guilty of murder, which is the final expression of hate. John was warning his readers against a spiritual danger that is all too real (1:8, 10). And he was affirming that a Christian who can hate his fellow Christian has not genuinely escaped from the darkness of this present passing age. To put it another way, he has much to learn about God and cannot legitimately claim an intimate knowledge of Christ. If he really knew Christ as he ought, he would love his brother.”
- From my commentary I have written: “John says that if we claim we are in the light, but really hate our brother then we are not in the light at all. “Does” trumps “says” and contradicts it. The idea is that it is impossible to be in the light, and at the same time hate our brother who has been saved by Christ. This is because God or Christ is synonymous with light, and so is regeneration. The person saved by Christ by the very definition is a person who is **in the light** (1:6-7). If the person then claiming to be in the light is in actuality hating another person in the light, the equation is impossible. Love and light go together, and hate and darkness go together. There is no other mixture possible. It is impossible because of what has just been discussed about the nature of God, and of love (2:5-6). Such a person who hates their brother is claiming to be in the light, but in reality they are in darkness (the realm of the unregenerate).” Context - also, see 1 John 3:10.