

GOD DESIRES ALL TO BE SAVED (I)

Is it Reformed to say this? More importantly, is it Biblical?

Put aside every human teacher and author for the time being. Just lock yourself up with the Word of God. Face them squarely, grapple with them honestly and come up with your own answers instead of quoting this teacher or that author. Are you ready?

[1] **Ezekiel 18:30-32** ~ *“Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways,” says the Lord GOD. “Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies,” says the Lord GOD. “Therefore turn and live!”*

What does God call the people to do here? *My answer is to repent and turn from their sins. What’s your answer?*

What will happen if they don’t do it? *My answer is that they will be ruined, that they will die. What’s your answer?*

What is God’s reaction to their ruin? *My answer is that He says He has no delight in seeing this happen. In other words, He desires to see them repent and live. Do you agree with my answer? If not, what’s your answer?*

[2] **Ezekiel 33:11** ~ *Say to them: ‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die, O house of Israel?’*

What is it that delights God and what is it that doesn’t? *My answer is that when the wicked turn from their sins and are saved, God is delighted; but when sinners remain in their sins and perish, God says it explicitly that it brings Him no pleasure at all. In short, God desires their salvation! What is your answer?*

How does God express His desire that they turn and live? *My answer is that He calls them to turn, He commands them to repent, He pleads and reasons*

with them as to why they would want to die. God does this because He wants them to be saved. Do you agree? If not, how should you understand this verse?

- [3] **Matthew 23:37** ~ *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!*

This was spoken by Jesus Christ the Son of God. A parallel passage can be found in **Luke 13:34**. By ‘Jerusalem’, Jesus is talking about the people living there, not the city structure. Their badness is seen in the phrase *“who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her”*. What did Jesus say concerning them? *My answer is that Jesus wants to gather them to Himself, but they don’t want to be gathered! This I read in **Matthew 23:37**. Have I misread the Bible?*

Now, leaving aside the second part of the statement – *“but they don’t want to be gathered”*, my question is: *Is Jesus sincere when He says He wants to gather these people to Him often? Does He mean what He says and says what He means? There can only be one answer that accord with reverence. Jesus is sincere. To reply otherwise is blasphemy! Now, what does it mean to say Jesus is sincere in what He says here? My answer is that He wants them to be saved, He desires their salvation, He yearns and longs for them to humble themselves and yield to the Gospel. You find fault with my answer? Then what’s your answer, an answer that must not violate the fact that Jesus means what He says and says what He means here?*

- [4] Take some time to ponder the Parable of the Great Supper in **Luke 14:15-24**. *Do you think the man was sincere in inviting his guests to the supper? Do you think he desires that they accept his invitation? And who do you think that man in the parable represents?*

We shall look at more Scripture passages in our next study. But from the four passages above, I cannot but conclude that God desires the salvation of all sinners. Yes, I cannot tie this up with other doctrines I believe and hold dearly to, but I have no right to water down this Biblical teaching so that I can be a reformed logician. God desires all sinners to be saved. Here I stand. So God help me!