

## **A Fortiori:**

**Romans 5:8, 9. But the God demonstrates His own love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died as a substitute for us. Much more [with greater reason], therefore having now been justified [received imputed righteousness and declared righteous and qualified to go to heaven] by his blood [redemption, reconciliation, propitiation] we will be delivered from the wrath of God through him [through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross; Logically, the believer cannot be cast into the Lake of Fire.]**

συνίστησιν δὲ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀγάπην εἰς ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ὅτι ἔτι ἀμαρτωλῶν ὄντων ἡμῶν Χριστὸς ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀπέθανεν. 9 πολλῶ οὖν μᾶλλον δικαιοθέντες νῦν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ σωθησόμεθα διὰ αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς.

“A fortiori” is a Latin phrase meaning "with stronger reason." (The equivalent Greek phrase is “*pollo mallon*” by how much more.) It is a system of logic comparing two facts. Then by this system, one can infer from these two facts a stronger fact or conclusion. This stronger fact or conclusion is so powerful that it cannot be denied, it is an inescapable conclusion. This inescapable conclusion produces confidence in the Christian using it.

Even though nothing is difficult for God, the most difficult thing from the viewpoint of degree was providing salvation for sinful mankind. In order to do so, God the Father had to design a plan by which his righteousness would be satisfied. The Son would have to agree to become the God-Man, agree to provide the work for reconciliation and propitiation. His humanity would require a spiritual life strong enough to carry out this near impossible plan. The Holy Spirit would need to provide the power in order that the humanity of Christ would reach the cross in a state of perfect human righteousness and remain there until every sin of mankind was judged. This was not a simple matter.

On the other hand, one of the easiest things for God to do is to provide eternal security for Christians. Since all believers received imputed righteousness at salvation, God declares them qualified to live with him forever which declaration an immutable God cannot change. So, the pre-salvation and post-salvation sins already paid for on the cross, and other failures of the believer cannot remove the imputed righteousness given to him unconditionally at salvation. This is a relatively simple matter compared to what was required to provide a propitiatory offering on the cross for all mankind.

If God has done the most difficult thing for his enemies namely the work on the cross and all that led up to it, it follows logically he will not withhold the less difficult namely eternal security for his beloved children.

It is most difficult to give the believer at salvation imputed righteousness and to declare him perfectly righteous. It is easy for God to keep the believer from the Last Judgment. If God gave an unrighteous person as part of the salvation package his righteousness (when he believed in Jesus Christ), then he cannot take away that righteousness from a righteous person (the Christian with imputed righteousness). God gave his righteousness to a person whom he did not love personally. Therefore, God who is always rational cannot take away his righteousness from a person (Christian) for whom he has infinite personal love.

Paul understood that God is rational. Therefore, Paul uses an “a fortiori” system of reasoning to prove that the Christian cannot be brought before the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of history (Revelation 20:11-15). If the Christian can reason, then he will agree that if God did the most difficult things for his enemies, with greater reason, he would provide the simpler things for his beloved children (solve problems, provide eternal security etc.).

**Romans 5:10. For if while we were enemies [as unbelievers], we were reconciled to the God [the Father] by means of the *substitutionary spiritual* death of His Son and we were, by how much more, having**

**been reconciled** [barrier between God and man removed by Christ], **we** [His beloved Christians] **shall be delivered by His life.**

εἰ γὰρ ἐχθροὶ ὄντες κατηλλάγημεν τῷ θεῷ διὰ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, πολλῶ μᾶλλον καταλλαγέντες σωθησόμεθα ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ·

Usually, one can do a lot more in his life than in his death. However, Jesus Christ did the most difficult for us as unbelievers through the work of His substitutionary death. Then, it follows logically that he can provide a spiritual life, an eternal body, and an eternal relationship with Him etc. through his life at the right hand of the Father. If we were reconciled to God as His enemies, it follows, *a fortiori*, that we will be delivered as sons by His life. In other words, if greater benefit has been given (reconciliation), the less (deliverance by His life) will not be withheld. If God can do the greater, it follows, *a fortiori*, that God can accomplish the less. Greater or less is not a matter of quality but of logical effort required.

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Based on the scholarly work of R.B. Thieme Jr.

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