

# Question Series

## Session 2

### Question 1: What Does the Bible teach about the “Age of Accountability”?

To answer this, we have to look at two views. Some believe that there is no specific age to which people can be saved, while others believe that it is better that young children should wait. These believe that young children are not guilty before God until they knowingly disobey God’s commands. Or, in other words, they have an understanding of what sin is and knowing right from wrong.

So let’s turn to God’s word for answers, I found five points to consider:

- 1) Scripture teaches two truths related to our sin and responsibility before God. Adam represented the entire human race in his disobedience which brought sin into the world. (Read: Romans 5:12-14; 19) So, as a result all mankind is guilty and corrupted which leads to spiritual and physical death. (Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23) All humans are under God’s righteous judgement due to Adam’s sin and our own sin. On the final day, no one will be able to blame Adam for their guilt and their own sin. So, the difficulty arises in applying these truths to infants or those who have limited capabilities of understanding these truths.
- 2) God rightly demands obedience and devotion from each of his image bearers, but those with more revelation are more accountable. Sin is a failure to meet God’s absolute demand. Yet scripture, speaks of a greater accountability for those who know more of God’s revealed will. In Romans 2:17-25, Paul brings out the fact that the Jews should know better because they know what the law says. Those who have a greater understanding of God’s revelation are more knowledgeable of their guilt before God.
- 3) Christ alone accomplishes our salvation and acts as our Redeemer. We know that apart from Christ’s life, death and resurrection, there is no salvation. Through the cross and his resurrection, we are redeemed. We receive the benefits of Christ’s work by grace through placing our faith in Him. Infants or younger children are not to the point of understanding the truths. The question here hinges on a “conscious” faith; a faith that understands what Jesus had done for them.
- 4) Under normal circumstances, we only benefit from Christ’s work by repenting of our sins and placing our faith in Him. So here is a question: What about the exceptional cases such as infants or others who lack the capabilities to believe? To this question, the Bible does not address the issue. But it does offer a hint of mercy in these cases. The Judge of all the earth and that is God almighty always does what is right. (Read: Genesis 18:25) God who is gracious, merciful and just will always do what is right in every case. Although there is no explicit biblical text that teaches an age of accountability, in light of all these truths, I don’t think it is unwarranted to agree that in exceptional cases, God will demonstrate His grace and mercy.

- 5) While a combination of these hints and other truths leads us to find comfort in God's mercy in the exceptional cases, we must not allow it to drive us beyond scripture in normal cases. Some may ask, but what about those who have never heard the gospel? To answer this let me say this, humans are not guilty because they haven't heard the gospel, they are guilty because they have not honored their Creator. In other words, it is not because of the absence of something we call faith, but because of the presence of something we call rebellion. So, will God condemn the innocent tribesman who has not heard the name of Jesus? NO, because there are no innocent tribesman. How can a person accept something or in this case someone being Jesus in whom they have never heard of or know? If they have heard and then reject then they do face judgement.

So in conclusion, what we gather is this: According to scripture, there is not specific age of accountability. It is really dependent on the understanding of an individual when they begin to understand what sin is and to understand what Jesus has done for them on the cross. Some children begin to understand this at a younger ages than others.

**Question 2: My children accepted Jesus as their Savior when they were kids and were baptized. Now, as adults they do not exercise their faith at all and seem to not care. I truly believe their salvation experience was real but are they truly saved? So, in other words, can a backsliding believer who we believe was truly saved, lose their salvation?**

We have heard it said "Once saved always saved" but what about the backsliding Christian? To answer this: Let's look at Hebrews 6:4-6

We all at one time have gone through periods of willful sinning. That is knowing what is right and doing what is wrong anyway.

When we are saved, there is a desire to grow in Christ. Faith in Christ is and should be active and living. In other words, we should have a desire to be with other believers and grow in our relationship with the Lord. Saving faith involves more than just belief. Now, this does not mean works saves us, but it means because we are saved, we want to serve the Lord.

So, saying this, let us go back to the passage: The writer here is referring to those who merely profess their faith. Some feel that this passage teaches that a true Christian can become lost, but what I believe is the writer is giving a warning to the backsliding believer. Regardless to how, sinful we become, even after being truly born again, we always have the possibility to repent and to change our direction. (I John 1:9) Even the prodigal son, saw the error of his ways, repented and turned back to his father. So, what we need to do is encourage the person we are concerned about to repent and turn back to God. What I believe is this: The only unpardonable sin is rejecting Christ. All other sins can be forgiven.

When I think of the backsliding person, I think about a person who may have never been saved to begin with. In other words, those who have claimed to know him and turn away from him demonstrate the fact that in actuality they never really knew Him. They may even be a person

who is angry with God for various reasons. Here is another thought that comes from vs. 6, the rejection of Christ after confessing Him is an act of relentless hostility but God will always pardon all who truly repent.

(Key) The Bible does promise that God will keep those who truly know Him (John 10:28-29).