

CORRECTION REGARDING THE VIEW OF ARDEL B. CANEDAY CONCERNING 1 CORINTHIANS 9:23-27

EDITOR

In the Spring 2011 issue of *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* I reviewed an article by Dr. Ardel Caneday on 1 Cor 9:23-27.¹ Afterwards it was called to my attention that I misrepresented Caneday in a quote I gave.

The misrepresentation occurred when I was discussing what I thought was a contradiction in Caneday's article. I said, "Caneday contradicts himself as to whether Paul was or was not expressing concern in 1 Cor 9:23-27 that he might be eternally condemned." I then gave an example, but my example was in error.

Here is what I wrote, "For example, [Caneday says that] 'Paul poses the possibility of his own failure to pass the test in the Day of Judgment and the possibility of his being cast into perdition [i.e., the lake of fire]' (p. 6; see also pp. 25-26)."

There are actually two errors in my quote.

THE FIRST ERROR: PRESENTING SOMEONE ELSE'S VIEW AS CANEDAY'S VIEW

The words I quote are Caneday summarizing the view of Shank and Marshall, who are Arminians, not Caneday's stating his own view. Caneday is a Calvinist.

After discussing what he calls "The Loss of Salvation View" (pp. 5-6), the view of Shank and Marshall, he then explains a group of views he calls "Extra-Salvation Loss Views" (pp. 3-20). He begins that section with these words:

The idea that Paul poses the possibility of his own failure to pass the test in the Day of

¹ Available free online at www.faithalone.org. Click on Journals & Newsletters, then Journal, then 2011, then Spring.

Judgment and the possibility of his being cast into perdition [i.e., the lake of fire] prompts many to shudder at the prospect and leads them to theological ingenuity. The result is a variety of innovative explanations of 1 Corinthians 9:27 that contend that, while Paul fears a loss, his fear does not entail loss of salvation but rather loss of an extra-salvation reward, a reward that is in addition to his salvation which is secure (p. 6).

The words *The idea that* refer back to the first view he was discussing. I do not think that I caught that in my reading of the article. But I should have since he had just finished discussing that view. Thus when Caneday writes, “Paul poses the possibility of his own failure to pass the test in the Day of Judgment and the possibility of his being cast into perdition [i.e., the lake of fire],” he is summarizing the Arminian view.

Possibly the reason I thought Caneday was stating his own view to introduce the second view is because there are similar statements by Caneday—or at least statements that appear to me to say essentially the same thing—about his own view later in the article (see pp. 26-29). However, Caneday has assured me that he does not agree with the statement that “Paul poses the possibility of his own failure to pass the test in the Day of Judgment and the possibility of his being cast into perdition [i.e., the lake of fire].”

I apologize heartily for this error. It really is a major error. As to whether Caneday’s own view is similar to the quotation I cited, I strongly urge the reader to take the time to read Caneday’s article, which is, of course, what every writer wants. Give him a fair reading. His article is available free online.²

THE SECOND ERROR: LEAVING IMPORTANT WORDS OUT OF THE CITATION

The second error is related to the first, though some explanation is needed.

² Available online at http://www.preciousheart.net/ti/2007/020_07_Caneday_1_Cor_9_23-27.pdf.

In my review article I only gave part of the sentence Caneday wrote. Let me lay out both the portion I quoted and the entire sentence in the original:

What I quoted:

Paul poses the possibility of his own failure to pass the test in the Day of Judgment and the possibility of his being cast into perdition [i.e., the lake of fire]' (p. 6; see also pp. 25-26).

The full quote, with the words left out underlined:

The idea that Paul poses the possibility of his own failure to pass the test in the Day of Judgment and the possibility of his being cast into perdition [i.e., the lake of fire] prompts many to shudder at the prospect and leads them to theological ingenuity.

I leave it to the reader to determine whether the quote I gave accurately summarizes the view that Caneday is discussing. In my opinion, it does. However, since I failed to grasp that the words *the idea that* mean that Caneday is summarizing the view he just finished discussing, I felt they were extraneous, as were the words at the end of the sentence.

It is my practice to put ellipses (...) in places where I leave out material in the middle of a quotation. If I give a complete quotation of part of a sentence, I typically do not put ellipses at the start and/or end of the portion cited. For example, I might write, "Paul said that salvation is 'the gift of God' (Eph 2:8-9)." I would not write, "Paul said that salvation is '...the gift of God...' (Eph 2:8-9)." This is a matter of style.

However, I never intentionally leave out material that alters the meaning of a sentence. That I left out material here which did alter the meaning is very unfortunate. I am very sorry for both errors, and have told Caneday that. He was very gracious in accepting my apology.

CONCLUSION

In light of the errors I made, I have added a footnote and an appendix in the online version of my article, explaining the errors I made. It is now available on our website under the Journal section (though normally we wait a year before putting up articles).

I apologize to our readers and to Dr. Caneday for these two errors. James 3:1 comes to mind, “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.” I always feel a great sense of responsibility as I write. I realize I will give an account at the Judgment Seat of Christ for what I have written and said. I have to work hard to overcome my perfectionism to release anything I write. When something like this happens (fortunately not too often), it makes me redouble my efforts at being accurate both in interpreting God’s Word and in interpreting what others write about God’s Word.