

DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE

by

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-----Rom 680 5/7/79, 727 10/14/79; Eli 60
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DOCTRINE OF A FORTIORI

A. Definition.

1. A fortiori is a Latin phrase meaning "with stronger reason." It is a system of logic using comparison. It is a conclusion compared with some other conclusion or recognized fact, as inferred to be even more certain or inescapable than the two conclusions it combines.

2. A fortiori uses an inferential conclusion as being more conclusive than another reasoned conclusion. In setting up a comparison, it establishes reality in both conclusions as they are inferentially related.

3. A fortiori is a system of argumentation or debate which takes an accepted fact and by comparison produces an inescapable fact and confident conclusion. The phrase is used in argumentation to produce several categories of conclusion.

a. That something does not take place because the causes which alone could bring it to pass operate still more strongly in another case without producing that effect. Classical illustration: the United States should have been destroyed a long time ago; that's a cause which should have occurred. But a stronger cause keeps it from being destroyed: Jesus Christ controls history.

b. That something does take place because causes much weaker than those which operate to bring it about are effective in another case. Illustration: if a weak man is dangerous, it follows, with stronger reason (a fortiori), that a weak and evil man must be more dangerous. Or another illustration: if Shakespeare has avoided obscurities in his sonnets, it follows, a fortiori, that he would do so in his plays for the purpose of immediate effect on the stage and for future appreciation (e.g., Hamlet).

4. A fortiori is the only thing which explains certain passages of Scripture.

Unfortunately, not too many pastors understand it.

B. The A Fortiori of Logistical Grace, Matt 6:28-30. "And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not work neither do they spin. In fact, I say to you that even Solomon in all of his glory did not clothe himself like one of these; in fact if God keeps clothing the common grass of the field [and He does] which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not do much more for you, O believer of negative faith-rest?"

1. If God can provide for grass, which gets a lot of pressure (people walk all over it, dogs urinate on it, weather tears it up, dries it out, floods it), can God take care of you? Of course He can; you are much more important to Him than grass. Therefore, you have no right to ever be worried about the necessities of life.

2. The Greek phrase POLLOI MALLON is the sign of a fortiori, meaning "much more."
3. If God clothes the grass, it follows, a fortiori, that He will clothe the believer. If God does not withhold supporting and sustaining grass, it follows, a fortiori, that God will not withhold sustaining you. Is there a blade of grass in the United States? Do you have any clothes on your back?
4. You remember this principle in times of pressure. For you can use this passage in the second stage of the faith-rest drill, and apply it to your desperate situation at the time.

C. The A Fortiori of Deliverance from the Last Judgment, Rom 5:8-9. "But the God demonstrates His own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died instead of us. Much more, therefore, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be delivered from the wrath of God through Him."

1. Here is the first principle of having God's perfect righteousness: you do not and cannot ever go to the lake of fire; you can never be judged at the Last Judgment.
2. This implies that those with relative righteousness will go to the Last Judgment. They are not indicted for their sins, but they are condemned because relative righteousness cannot have fellowship with perfect divine righteousness. Unbelievers go to hell because of self-righteousness, not because of sin. All unbelievers depend on their own self-righteousness to somehow get them into heaven; it won't work.
3. If the believer is justified by the blood of Christ, it follows, a fortiori, that the believer will be delivered at the Last Judgment. Justification means having God's perfect righteousness. With perfect righteousness, there's no way you can be at the Last Judgment or go to hell. No one can take perfect righteousness from you, and that is all that is required to go to heaven.
4. If the greater benefit has been given (justification), God will not withhold the less (the avoidance of the lake of fire).
5. A fortiori is the way to apply doctrine in reverse concentration.

D. The A Fortiori of Reconciliation, Rom 5:10. "For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by means of the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be delivered by His life."

1. If we were reconciled to God as His enemies, it follows, a fortiori, that we will be delivered as sons by His life.
2. In other words, if greater benefit has been given (reconciliation), the less (deliverance by His life) will not be withheld.
3. 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 effort required.

E. The A Fortiori of Temporal Blessing, Rom 5:15. "But not as the transgression [Adam's original sin], so also is the gracious gift [First Advent]. For if by the transgression of that one [Adam] the many died, and they did, much more the grace of God, even the gift of grace by one man, Jesus Christ, who has provided super abundance for the many [mature believers]."

1. If God provides the greater in justification (imputation of perfect righteousness), it follows, a fortiori, that the justice of God can provide the less, the imputation of special blessings at maturity and thereafter. These special blessings, sometimes called supergrace blessings, glorify God in time.

2. The logistical grace rationale takes you from the point of justification to the point of maturity, linking the two. For all logistical grace is imputed to the perfect righteousness in you.

F. The A Fortiori of Eternal Blessing, Rom 5:17.

1. "For if by the transgression of the one [Adam] the spiritual death ruled through that one [and it did], much more, they who received in life this surplus from grace and the gift of righteousness, much more they shall rule through that one, Jesus Christ."

a. If the justice of God provided the greater at spiritual maturity, i.e., the imputation of special blessings, it follows, a fortiori, that the justice of God will not withhold the less, i.e., eternal blessings and rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ. This parlays special blessing into eternal blessing, and sets up motivation which jumps from time all the way into eternity.

b. The six categories of supergrace blessings in time form the Third Hope (Hope 3), the absolute confidence that I will have great blessings and rewards in eternity ("much more they shall rule through that one, Jesus Christ").

2. All this development is the system of rationale with which Paul starts Romans. If you have God's perfect righteousness, you have logistical blessing. If you have logistical blessing, its purpose is to support you so you can advance to receive special blessing. If you have special blessing in time, that is a guarantee that you will have something even greater in eternity because it's easier to provide; it's the less. The less is always easier to provide, but it's always the greater factor. Eternal blessing and reward glorifies God forever.

G. A Fortiori Rationale for Disaster, Rom 8:31-32. These a fortiori blessing rationales combine into one so that you have the perfect rationale for disaster in Rom 8:31-32. "Therefore, face to face with these things, to what conclusion are we forced? If God is for us, who is against us? God, who did not even spare His own Son, but on behalf of all of us He delivered Him over to judgment, how shall He not also with Him in grace give to us the all things?"

1. The last phrase, "how shall He not . . ." combines the temporal and eternal a fortiori rationales. Both of these a fortiorii of blessing are administered through the grace policy of God. They are the means of glorifying God, one in time and one in eternity.

2. You will never glorify God apart from these two imputations of special blessings in time and in eternity. You cannot glorify God in time by what you do; God is glorified by what He does! You're not here to do great things for God; you're here to learn and grow. So if you ever do glorify God, it's not because of what you do, what you give up, how righteous or moral you are, or how great people say you are. It's because you have maximum doctrine resident in your soul.

3. So the a fortiori of Rom 8:31-32 is designed to show you that there are only two ways to glorify God:

a. To receive in grace special blessings in time under six categories.

b. To receive in grace at the Judgment Seat of Christ the imputation of eternal blessing and reward.

4. The one glorifies God in time and is tactical; the other glorifies God in eternity and is strategical. This summarizes the whole purpose for the believer remaining on the earth.

H. The A Fortiori of Israel's Cursing and Blessing, Rom 11:12. "Now if their apostasy [big blot out] becomes the riches of the world, and if their failure [loss of client nation status] became the riches of the Gentiles [and it did], how much more will be their fullness."

1. If the justice of God provides the greater in blessing the Gentiles through Jewish apostasy and punishment, it follows, a fortiori, that God will not withhold the less, i.e., greater blessing to the Gentiles in the millennial restoration of Israel. The "fullness" of Israel is their millennial restoration and their continuation and perpetuation as a client nation.

2. This emphasizes the fact that "greater" is not quality or quantity but degree of effort.

3. In other words, it is easier for God to bless the Gentiles when the Jews enjoy their client nation status than during a time when only Gentile nations are client nations. We are blessed today in a wonderful way, but we would be blessed even more as Gentiles if Israel were the client nation today.

4. The greatest blessings will come to the Gentiles during the millennial reign of Christ when the Jews have been restored to client nation status. Zech 8:22-23 says that ten Gentiles will grab the robe of one Jew and say, "If you're going to Jerusalem, take us with you."

5. The Millennium is the time of Israel's fullness, which produces much more blessing for the Gentiles under the principle of blessing by association.

6. The "times of the Gentiles" is in contrast to the time of Israel's fullness.

7. The Gentiles have maximum blessing in the Church Age through Israel's fall, but will have greater than maximum blessing in the Millennium when Israel is restored as a client nation. Remember a fortiori means greater in degree of effort. It is more difficult for God to bless us Gentiles when the Jews are out under the fifth cycle of discipline. It is easier to bless the Gentiles when the Jews have been restored to client nation status.

8. This is part of an explanation in context as to what happens to a nation that tries to add punishment to God's punishment to the nation Israel. The nation or individual that tries it in anti-Semitism will be utterly and completely destroyed.

9. It is very difficult for God to bless Gentiles in Gentile nations. It is hard to bless a nation, like ours, full of socialism and evil. Gentile nations always malfunction on the outside in missions and always become corrupt on the inside because they are stupid. But change Gentile client nations to a Jewish client nation, and the whole world prospers!

10. The perfect environment of the Millennium could not exist without Israel as a client nation (plus the overthrow of Satan and the restraint of the old nature through the correct function of justice and law enforcement).

a. There has only been one super-race in history: the Jews. Individual Jews are so smart; probably the 100 richest men in the world today are Jews.

b. This fact does not comprise a conspiracy; it is simply the facts that most Jews are smarter. Yet they are under discipline and cursing today which can only be changed to blessing by believing in Jesus Christ.

11. So if the cursing to the nation and the individual Jew today produces blessing for the Gentile, what will happen when Israel is in a state of blessing, as both client nation and individual? It will be super-blessing for the Gentile.

12. So the message to Israel here is: "When you see Gentiles believing and responding to Christ, it is time for you to wake up and believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior and the God of Israel. For it is only by emulating the Gentiles' faith in Christ that you can come to blessing, until the Millennium." This is one of the great messages in Romans 11. This is why it is extremely important for the Gentile client nation to provide a haven of protection for the Jews.

I. The A Fortiori Rationale.

1. A fortiori is the super-charger or booster of the plan of God rationale. The a fortiori rationale stimulates the function of reverse concentration as the second stage of the faith-rest drill, which leads to the third stage, reaching a doctrinal conclusion and gaining control of the situation.

2. A fortiori is a shorter and quicker rationale for emergencies where rapid decision and rapid action is necessary. It is therefore both a system of logic, using comparison, and a rationale for the believer under pressure making a correct conclusion.

3. A fortiori compares a previous conclusion of doctrine with another conclusion of doctrine to understand and apply the inescapable certainty of God's grace policy in His perfect plan.

4. A fortiori uses an inferential conclusion as being more conclusive or certain than another recognized fact or reasoned conclusion from the past, so that the mature believer gains momentum as he begins to apply doctrine. He makes one conclusion and sees it work under testing, and then he makes another conclusion under another system of testing. Then in time of great disaster, he puts together these proven conclusions.

5. So this rationale relates certainty to certainty and dogma to dogma to give the believer confidence in the plan of God, and to cause the believer to conclude that the only security in life is what you carry in your thinking. In life, every time you apply doctrine in your soul to a situation, there is a decoration for you in heaven.