

ETERNAL Life

A Biblical Perspective

By
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The following Bible study course has been prepared for independent study. It's intent is to guide the student through the biblical teaching on the subject of eternal life. It is very important that the student read each chapter carefully including each verse mentioned. After studying the material, turn to the test booklet and complete the appropriate section. Upon completion of the 10 chapters, return your test booklet to your Bible correspondence school to be graded. Send your course to the following address:

LESSON 1

IS IT REALLY IMPORTANT TO KNOW IF MY SALVATION CAN BE LOST?

When a person accepts Christ as his personal Savior, he enters into a new life. The Bible states that he is spiritually quickened or given life. However, the nagging question of spiritual death can become a great stumbling block in that person's life. Questions such as, "Can I do something to be separated from God?" or "How can I be sure that I am saved?" can become major issues. It is important therefore, to understand what the Bible states about this issue. If a person's salvation can be lost, we must be aware of how that can happen. If salvation is secure and cannot be lost, we can then enjoy our salvation and live in freedom to serve God out of love rather than fear. Understanding the biblical truth regarding the security of salvation provides stability, freedom, and rest. This course is designed to present what the Bible teaches about this important subject.

WHAT IS ETERNAL SECURITY?

One of the most reassuring doctrines of the New Testament is that once a person has been saved he can never again be lost. To know that one is saved now is assurance; to know that one is saved forever is security. Many have the former (assurance) but believe the latter (security) is impossible or presumptuous. Unfortunately, some who call themselves Christians have neither.

Most problems in this regard come from faulty teaching, natural fears, a misunderstanding of what salvation really is or simply not believing the Word of God.

The Word of God is the primary source of assurance. The basis of our salvation is Christ's death and resurrection, but the basis of our as-

ETERNAL LIFE

urance is God's saying that it is so ("believe Him who sent me"). God cannot lie or change His mind. Titus 1:2 states, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Therefore, if God promises our salvation to be secure it must be so.

God promises life, eternal life, everlasting life, life forever. This is not a prolonging of our life but rather the very life of God.

Notice the following promises of God:

- ☞ **Life** - John 10:10b; 11:25; 14:6; 20:31; 2 Timothy 1:10; 1 John 5:12
- F **Eternal Life** - Definition: without end. John 3:15; 5:24; 10:28; 17:2,3; Acts 13:48; Romans 5:21; 6:23; Titus 1:2; 3:7; 1 John 2:25; 1 John 5:11-13; 5:20. If one has eternal life, it is not possible to have it one day and not have it another day. Eternal life is life that never ends.
- ☞ **Everlasting Life** - Definition: perpetual, continuing indefinitely. John 3:16; 5:24; 6:40, 47; 1 Timothy 1:16.
- ☞ **Life Forever** - Literally never-ending life. John 6:51; 6:58
- ☞ **Never Die** - John 11:26

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT VIEWS TAUGHT REGARDING ETERNAL SECURITY?

The new birth which God has promised is a misunderstood fact for many. There are those who object to the doctrine of eternal security by saying it is a dangerous doctrine. They say it gives a license to sin. The reasoning is that if a person cannot lose their salvation then they can do anything they want and not lose their salvation.

Some teach that one's salvation is only as sure as his faithfulness. They state that man must maintain his salvation through perseverance and faithfulness. Should a person who has accepted Christ as his Savior not continue steadfastly then he loses his salvation.

Others teach that one can lose his salvation through committing specific sins which are particularly bad. For example, if a person commits murder he certainly cannot enter heaven and has thus lost his salvation. These sins are occasionally referred to as unpardonable sins or sins unto death.

Those who teach these views reveal the fact that they have never clearly understood the new birth or regeneration. The fact is that a born-again person can do anything he wants to do without fear of losing his salvation **BUT** his desires have changed. The things he once loved will be hated and the things once hated will be loved. This change means that he no longer desires to follow after sin.

Regeneration, or the new birth, is the divine side of that change of heart which, viewed from the human side, is called conversion. At least eighty-five New Testament passages assert that a Christian is a changed person by virtue of the fact that he has received the very life of God. The new birth is not a mere remedy for human failures; it is a creation by divine regeneration. It is a change God alone, not any person, may effect. Regeneration includes various expressions related to eternal life, such as new life, new birth, spiritual resurrection, new creation, new mind, made alive, and translation into the Kingdom.

A number of important Scriptures speak of regeneration.

- Born Again - John 3:3-16; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 5:1, 4
- Quickened - John 5:21; Ephesians 2:1, 5; Colossians 2:13
- Regeneration - Titus 3:5
- Newness of Life - Romans 6:4
- Likeness of His Resurrection - Romans 6:5
- Alive - Romans 6:11, 13

ETERNAL LIFE

- Begot - James 1:18
- Created - Ephesians 2:10; 4:24; Colossians 3:10
- Spirit is Life - Romans 8:10
- Begun a Work - Philippians 1:6
- Work of Spirit - 1 Corinthians 6:11

The one regenerated is “born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:13). Regeneration is likened unto resurrection, which by its nature is wholly of God (John 5:21; Romans 6:13; Ephesians 2:5). Regeneration is also declared to be a creative act, the nature of which assumes it to be the act of God. (Ephesians 2:10; 4:24; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Throughout all the passages considered, regeneration is always revealed to be an act of God accomplished by His own supernatural power apart from all other agencies.

Regeneration is a supernatural work, in the which each member of the Godhead has a part. God, the Father is declared to be the source of regeneration in at least one instance (James 1:17, 18). Christ Himself, the second Person, is linked with regeneration several times in Scripture. (John 5:21; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 5:12). The Holy Spirit is declared to be the agent of regeneration (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). As in other great undertakings of the Godhead, each Person has an important part, in keeping with their own essence. As in the birth of Christ, where all persons of the Godhead were related to the conception of Christ, so in the new birth of the Christian the First Person becomes the Father of the believer, the Second Person imparts His own eternal life (1 John 5:12), and the Holy Spirit, the Third Person, acts as the administering agent of regeneration.

The work of the Godhead, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, cannot be undone.

Do not look at the things God does from a human, carnal minded standpoint. Our ways and thoughts are finite and very limited (Isaiah 55:8, 9). May we simply accept by faith what God has said in His Holy Word!

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD OF GOD SINS?

The fact that a person who has been saved is secure and that his salvation cannot be lost does not do away with the negative results of sin. A child of God who sins will suffer, however the consequences will not be the loss of his salvation. Notice what the Bible states about the Christian who sins.

A Christian who sins may first be punished by God. Carefully read Hebrews 12:5-11. We note here that chastening is a surety for the person who is saved and practicing sin. Hebrews 12:6-7 states, "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons". If a professing Christian can practice sin and not suffer God's chastening, or means of calling attention to sin in the life, then it is a sign that the person has never received Christ. Consider Galatians 6:7 which states, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The consequences of sin always have to be reckoned with. There is a price to be paid -- however that price is not the loss of salvation.

A second consequence of sin practiced in the life of a true Christian may be physical death. Every child of God will die for one of three reasons: because his work is finished; for the glory of God; or because of unconfessed sin in his life. The Bible states, "There is a sin unto death" (1 John 5:16c). Is this a particular sin that a person might commit or is it a state of sin? Biblically, we find that it is a state of sin. When a person who is saved refuses to humble himself in repentance for his sin, his heart is hardened. At some point, as he continues to refuse to yield to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit, he comes to a point of "sin unto death". This is a place where God prefers to take his life rather than to let his child continue in his sin.

Two examples in the Corinthian church serve as lessons. The first involved a person who was living in an immoral relationship. Instructions were given to the church about how to deal with this person. "To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the

ETERNAL LIFE

spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 5:5). This person was to be given over to Satan, in prayer, that his life might be taken. However he was not to lose his salvation. We note that his spirit was to be “saved in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The second example is found in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34. This church was not partaking of the Lord’s supper correctly. There were some sickly and anemic among them. “For this cause many are weak and sickly among you...” (1 Corinthians 11:30a). Others had died because of taking the Lord’s supper in an incorrect manner, “...and many sleep.” (1 Corinthians 11:30c). If a Christian will examine himself, confess and abandon sin, it will not be necessary to be chastened by the Lord. “For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE CONDEMNED WITH THE WORLD.” (1 Corinthians 11:31, 32). “Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits, and LIVE? Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” (Hebrews 12:9, 11).

We conclude then that the doctrine of eternal security as taught by the Bible is not dangerous neither does it absolve the Christian from his responsibility of living a godly life. Rather, eternal security provides the believer with a basis to live in confidence rather than fear.

LESSON 2

SIN - MAN'S CURSE

*“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”
Romans 5:12.*

In order to properly understand God's salvation and its security, we must first understand man's need for salvation. A proper understanding of man's curse as a result of sin and the miracle of salvation will help us to understand that it cannot be lost.

WHAT IS SIN?

- ☞ Sin is transgression, which is the stepping to one side, or the overstepping of those boundaries which God has set. 1 John 3:4
- ☞ Sin is iniquity, referring to that which is altogether wrong.
- ☞ Sin is error, that which disregards the right or goes astray.
- ☞ Sin is coming short or missing the mark.
- ☞ Sin is wickedness, the outworking and expressing of an evil nature, depravity.
- ☞ Sin is evil, with reference to that which is actually wrong, opposing God.
- ☞ Sin is ungodliness, lacking any worthy fear of God.
- ☞ Sin is disobedience, an unwillingness to be led or guided by truth.

ETERNAL LIFE

- ☞ Sin is unbelief, failure to trust in God.
- ☞ Sin is lawlessness, which consists in the persistent contempt and breaking of divine law, despite restraints provided by God; to the end that self might be gratified regardless of admonition or consequences to be paid.

WHO HAS SINNED?

The Bible is clear in stating that all have sinned. Numerous verses reinforce the teaching of Romans 3:23 which states, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” As we have seen in the previous lesson; by a sinful act, disobeying God, Adam acquired a sinful nature, and that nature has now been passed on to all the human family, as all are born with that nature. Genesis 6:5; Job 14:4, 15:14; Psalm 51:5; Ecclesiastes 7:20, 29; Isaiah 1:4-6; Mark 7:15, 20-23; Romans 3:9-18, Galatians 5:19-21; James 1:13-15; Ephesians 2:3.

WHAT IS THE RESULT OF SIN?

When Adam sinned for the first time, he disobeyed God and ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Adam’s fatal decision caused his immediate spiritual death and a drastic internal change. Adam became degenerate and depraved. His decision brought him under the rule of a fallen nature which is a propensity to go against God and to follow after evil. Adam’s constitution was fundamentally altered and he became a different being from that which God had created in the garden.

Adam’s sin not only brought about an internal change, it also brought him into bondage. Adam was no longer the free man which God had made him. By his rebellion, Adam came under the domination of Satan. He literally surrendered his life to the evil one. According to Romans 5:12, this same spiritual death has been passed on to every man. We too were born with a fallen nature and under the rule of Satan. What is the result of this spiritual death?

DEATH

Every human being, without Christ, is spiritually dead. It makes no difference who his parents are, what his social standing is or any other outward characteristic. Inwardly, spiritually all who are without Christ are dead. This means that all men need a new life, they must be born again. The Bible describes this new birth as regeneration. Obviously, this is something that only God can do. Man, through religion, good works, science or any other method is incapable of creating life. Only God can regenerate a spiritually dead person and give them life. Ephesians 2:1; Genesis 2:17; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; John 10:10.

The Bible lists three types of death which each person born into the world experiences as a result of sin.

- Spiritual death, which is separation of soul and spirit from God.
- Physical death began at once its unavoidable process of disintegration and eventual separation of soul and spirit from the body.
- The second death, which is the lake of fire - the eternal separation of soul and spirit from God.

Only God can bring about life in one who is dead. Good works or man's efforts cannot bring about life. Only God who is life can breathe His eternal life into one who is spiritually dead.

LOSTNESS

The Bible also states that every person without Christ is lost. A lost item is one that has been mislaid or left in an unknown location. This is the condition of a person who is lost. He cannot find himself, he must seek help from someone who can lead him to safety. Those who are without Christ need to be found and rescued by God. Luke 19:10; 2 Corinthians 4:3.

ETERNAL LIFE

Jesus used three parables in Luke 15 to describe the condition of the lost sinner. In the parable of the lost sheep, the sheep was lost because of having gone astray. (Luke 15:1-7; Isaiah 53:6) In the parable of the lost coin, the coin was lost because it had fallen and was incapable of finding itself. The parable of the prodigal son describes one who was lost due to his own foolishness. The prodigal was not lost because of ignorance nor because he fell; he chose to leave his father willingly.

Any of these lost conditions can only be remedied by God. Only He is capable of reaching the one who has gone astray, lifting up the fallen, or restoring one who has willingly gone away. A man cannot find himself by good works. This is a work of God.

SLAVERY

The Bible states that a third result of sin is that every human being is a slave and needs to be set free. The sinner, although he often does not realize it, is under the power and control of another. Sin is a master and the sinner is a slave incapable of freeing himself (John 8:34; Romans 6:16-20, 7:14). Redemption is the supernatural act by which God sets a person free from the power of another. A redeemer is the one who pays the price of liberation or setting free. The Bible clearly describes Christ as the redeemer who fulfills all requirements to set man free spiritually.

- Christ came to redeem. Luke 4:18; Mark 10:45.
- Christ paid the price of purchase. Galatians 3:13, 4:4,5; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18, 19
- Christ lives forever to free each and every sinner that will come unto Him from the bondage of sin. John 8:32-36; Ephesians 1:7; Gal. 5:1.
- Good works cannot redeem or set you free.

BLINDNESS

The Bible also describes every person without Christ as blind and in need of illumination. The Bible teaches the following truths regarding man's spiritual blindness.

1. Sin has darkened man's understanding. (Ephesians 4:18)

- ⊙ Satan has blinded the eyes of the natural man. "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- ⊙ Men cannot understand spiritual realities through their natural senses or minds. Understanding that which is spiritual requires a supernatural work. 1 Corinthians 2:14
- ⊙ Every person who has not been saved lives in darkness and loves the darkness. John 1:5; 3:19; Colossians 1:13.
- ⊙ For this reason, the spiritual eyes must be opened. Acts 26:18

2. Christ came to bring light. John 8:12, 9:5; Luke 2:32. The words of Christ bring light about God, sin, the sinner, salvation, the problems of life, and the horrible destiny of the person that rejects Christ. Psalm 119:130.

3. All that place their confidence in Christ are brought to life. 2 Corinthians 4:6; Ephesians 5:8. The Scriptures, when applied by the Spirit of God, open the eyes of the sinner to his need of Christ as the remedy for sin.

4. Man's works, intelligence or heritage will not give light.

REBELLION

Another result of sin is rebellion in the heart of man against God. Study the following biblical truths regarding man's rebellion against his creator.

1. Every person is found in a state of rebellion against God. Romans 5:10; 8:7, 8; Colossians 1:21; Titus 3:3. The truth is hated, the Word of God is resisted, and God is resisted as the supreme Lord. Rom 1:20-21; Daniel 5:23.
2. Every person needs to be reconciled. Every sinner must recognize and confess his rebellion, believe the Gospel, and submit himself unconditionally to Jesus Christ. In that manner one will come under the Lordship and control of the One whose blood made peace. Colossians 1:20; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21.
3. Good works will not change the rebellion of man.

GUILT

Every human being is guilty of breaking God's moral law. The Bible states that having broken one law, we become guilty of all. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10) Because of man's guilt he is in need of justification. Sin is an act against a Holy God and His moral code.

1. Every person is a sinner by nature. One does not have to become a sinner in order to sin; instead, one sins because he is a sinner, the sinful nature is the heart and root of wrongful thoughts, words and acts or deeds. Mark 7:21; Jeremiah 17:9
2. Every person is a sinner by choice and practice. This sinful nature manifests itself in thoughts, words, actions and attitudes. All sin, whether in or against ourselves, or against our fellow man, is in the first place against God. Psalm 51:4. The enormity of the crime is determined according to the person against which it is com-

mitted. All sin is against God. Hosea 7:2; Amos 5:12; Psalm 14:2,3; Romans 1:28-32; Titus 3:3. God hates all sins that we commit with the mind (Matthew 5:28), by words (Matthew 12:34-37) and by acts. (Jeremiah 44:3,4; Prov. 6:16-19).

3. Every person needs justification before God. Justification is to declare a person just. Justification is the act whereby God declares just, the sinner that places his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and receives Him as Lord and Savior. It is much more than pardon or forgiveness, because God then sees the believer as if he had never sinned. Romans 3:24-26, 5:1, 2; Gal. 2:16.

4. Good works cannot make you as though you had never sinned.

DEBT

Every person without Christ owes a debt and is in need of a pardon.

1. Every person is bankrupt spiritually and cannot pay their debt to God. A good life or “turning over a new leaf” is not enough. Good works, tears, good resolutions, religious acts or devotion is not enough to pay the debt that all of mankind owes.

2. God has provided the pardon. God can cancel the debt and do away with it. It is only done through the person and work of Christ. He paid the debt we could not pay with His own blood. Isaiah 43:25, 44:22, 55:7; Micah 7:18, 19; Acts 3:19, 13:38; Colossians 2:13.

GOD’S REMEDY FOR SIN

We have seen that because of sin, every person is found guilty and condemned before God. However, God has made a provision for man. God has supernaturally provided a remedy for each aspect of sin.

FORGIVENESS

The word forgive expresses the act of God in the putting away, releasing or pardoning of sin. It is the taking away of sin and its condemnation from the offender, or offenders, by imputing or putting the sin to, and imposing its righteous judgments upon another. God cannot make light of sin, so He could not be lenient or waive the penalty of sin. Divine forgiveness is therefore extended only when the last demand or penalty against the offender has been satisfied. Since no human being could ever render divine satisfaction for his sins, God, in measureless mercy has provided all. Divine forgiveness is based on the sacrifice of Christ and consists in a removal of sin in such a way that it is no longer charged against the sinner, but charged against his substitute. Ephesians 1:7

JUSTIFICATION

Justification is the divine decree which declares the believer to be eternally clothed with the righteousness of God. Sin presented quite a dilemma because God could allow nothing with sin to enter heaven. If God is Holy and perfect, then He cannot allow sin to enter his presence or He would no longer be God. Heaven would no longer be a perfect place if entered. That

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leaves every human being with a terrible problem. Bildad asked the question in Job 25:4: "How then can man be justified with God?" David wrote "For in thy sight shall no man living be justified." Psalm 143:2. Abraham was justified by faith, not works, Romans 4:1-4. David declared the person to be "blessed" unto whom God imputed righteousness without works. Romans 4:6; Psalm 32:1-2. Romans 5:15-19.

To the sinner, God is ready to forgive all sin and justify freely without the least or slightest compensation to God. Romans 3:24. God performs this supernatural miracle not because of who we are but because

of who He is. Salvation does not center primarily on man but rather on Jesus Christ. We are not told in the Scripture to believe on the church,

TTrue salvation is centered upon the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

nor in our good works, nor in baptism or the Lord's Supper for salvation. We are told to believe in Jesus Christ. True salvation is centered upon the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because of who Jesus Christ is and because of what He has done for us in His death and resurrection, we are commanded to repent of our sins and to believe in Him as our Lord and Savior. Luke 13:3; 24:46,47; Acts 26:20; Romans 10:9,10; 1 John 3:23. This is the most important decision one may make. Without it one is still under the condemnation of God (John 3:18, 36); he is rejected by Christ (Matthew 7:21-29; John 8:24); and is eternally lost. (Revelation 20:11-15).

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” is the promise of God. Acts 16:31; 13:38, 39; Gal. 2:16.

LESSON 3

A PERSON WHO RECEIVES CHRIST BECOMES A SON OF GOD

DEFINITION

***SONSHIP - THE BEGETTING OF A CHILD
RESULTING IN A LEGITIMATE
PARENT/CHILD RELATIONSHIP.***

Spiritually, sonship is the relationship that a person enters when he is saved and admitted to the family of God (John 1:12-13, 3:5; Romans 8:16, 17, 29; Gal. 3:26; 2 Peter 1:4). This unique relationship is permanent. One might say, "Once a son, always a son". A man may attempt to deny the paternity of a child, but DNA testing can confirm true paternity and sonship.

A son may bring shame and reproach upon his family and the family may disown him. However, he cannot cease being a son, though there be a name change and denial, because of a relationship by blood.

The same is true spiritually. One may bring shame and reproach on the name of God and on the name of Christ. However, one cannot cease to be a son or heir of God and joint-heir with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Just as a person cannot be "unborn" and cease to be the child of his parents, spiritually one who has been born again becomes a child of God by birth. He cannot be "unborn".

THE BELIEVER HAS A STANDING BEFORE GOD

When we obey God by believing on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, then the Scripture describes our condition by such words as “saved,” “adopted,” “begotten,” “redeemed,” “forgiven,” and “justified.” Ephesians 2:8, 1:5; 1 Peter 1:3, 18; Colossians. 2:13; Romans 5:1. Such words signify a standing or a position before God. They indicate a spiritual position which has been obtained for the believer by Jesus Christ through His death and resurrection. The believer is seen as having received the benefits of the work of Jesus Christ. The value of Christ’s work has been imputed to him and he is therefore “saved,” “adopted.” “begotten,” etc., and brought into the relationship of salvation. Romans 5:1-11; 8:31-39; Ephesians 1:3-14; Colossians 2:10-15; 1 Peter 1:1-5; 1 John 5:9-13.

Understanding the believer’s position in Christ is extremely important to understanding the biblical truth of eternal security. Many times, the believer’s position is simply stated in the Bible by the term “in Christ”. Simply stated, God places the believer “into Christ” at the moment of salvation. Being in Christ implies that the believer becomes the beneficiary of all that is Christ’s. Notice the teaching of the following verses:

Being in Christ implies that the believer becomes the beneficiary of all that is Christ’s.

“Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”
Ephesians 2:5-6

Notice also that the Apostle Paul uses this title in his greetings.

“Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.” Philippians 1:1

ETERNAL LIFE

“Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.” Philippians 4:21

“To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Colossians 1:2

We notice in the Bible that we are not only “in Christ” but that being in Christ also makes us complete. Carefully read the words of Colossians 2:10.

“And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.” Colossians 2:10.

In the Greek, in which the New Testament was written, this word means “possess fully” and the grammatical construction indicated a finished product.

To explain what he meant in calling the Christian “complete” the Apostle Paul in the following verses indicated that the believer in Jesus Christ “fully possessed” at least five things.

CLEANSING

The believer in Christ has received a spiritual cleansing. Colossians 2:11. This means that the moral uncleanness which characterizes every non-believer (Isaiah 64:6), has been washed away. The believer even though he may feel unclean, has been cleansed. 1 Corinthians 6:11.

QUICKENING

The believer has been “quickened” by God. Colossians 2:13a. The word “quickened” means “to make alive.” This teaches the great truth that God has given His own eternal life to all who believe on His Son. John 3:16, 36; 1 John 5:11,12. Though once dead to God (Ephesians 2:1), the new believer now possesses eternal life (John 10:28) and has experienced the new birth (John 3:3, 5).

FORGIVENESS

The third possession of the believer is forgiveness. Colossians 2:13b. The Bible, by use of the word “all” emphasizes the completeness of this forgiveness. This pertains to the individual’s guilt, (Romans 3:23) with its resultant condemnation (John 3:18) and death (Romans 5:12, 6:23). The believer is fully forgiven; he is no longer guilty, no longer under the sentence of condemnation and death (John 5:24; Romans 8:1).

JUSTIFICATION

The believer has also been justified. Colossians 2:14. As man’s representative, Jesus Christ satisfied the demands of God’s law. This work has been imputed to the believer. On this basis, the believer is looked upon by God as justified -- as though he had perfectly obeyed God and was therefore perfectly righteous. Romans 5:1, 19; 8:1-4; 10:3,4.

FREEDOM

The final possession, which Paul indicates as belonging to every Christian, is that of freedom from Satan. Colossians 2:15. Christ became human that He might free us from the enemy. Hebrews 2:14, 15; 1 John 3:8. The value and power of His work has been imputed to us. The believer has been set free (Ephesians 1:19-2:6; Colossians 2:13). He no longer belongs to Satan -- he belongs to God and irrevocably so. Irrevocably means it cannot be recalled, reversed, or annulled.

The remarkable fact is that the believer possesses all of these spiritual benefits completely. He is not half forgiven, or half justified. This is what Paul meant by “complete.” The believer “fully possesses” all these benefits.

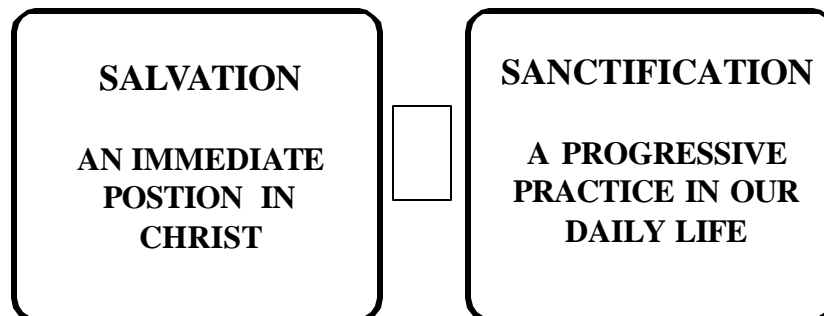
Ye are complete
in Christ.

Colossians 2:10

LESSON 4

SANCTIFICATION AND ETERNAL SECURITY

A great difference exists in the Bible when speaking of the believer's position in Christ in contrast to the believer's practical sanctification. That is to say, there is a difference between who I am and how I may act. We might illustrate it in this way - a person may be made a king in a day but it takes a lifetime to learn to act like one. In Christ, we are made holy and called saints immediately at the moment we are born again. However, the process of learning to live according to our new nature may not be instant. We must learn to put off the old and learn to live as "new creatures" in Christ. The fact that we must learn to live in a holy manner does not change our standing in Christ.



On the one hand the Bible teaches the permanence of the believer's possession of salvation into which he has been fully brought. On the other hand it exhorts him to develop his "walk" and his "witness." The instruction in all of this is to the effect that the believer has a twofold relationship with God. There is the relationship of salvation, in which he is complete, and there is the relationship of sanctification, in which the believer will always be incomplete. In salvation he is born again, in sanctification he matures in his new life. However, maturing does not give him life, life comes from birth.

The Bible exhorts the believer to “seek, “mortify,” “put off,” and to “put on.” Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:1, 5, 8.

There are many commandments which specify that the believer is to “grow” (1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18) and to “work out your own salvation.” Philippians 2:12. The phrase “work out your own salvation” does not teach that salvation comes by works. Rather, it is emphasizing the need of progressive sanctification. That is, that the believer’s salvation is to be shown by the life that those around us see.

It is absolutely essential that the believer understand the difference between salvation and sanctification. If the difference is not understood and clearly distinguished, it will not be possible to understand the Bible or live the Christian life successfully.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN SALVATION AND SANCTIFICATION.

This distinction is necessary in order to understand the plan of salvation.

The Bible is unwavering in its denial that salvation is based on good works. It emphasizes in a great variety of ways that one does not achieve salvation by human endeavors of any type. (Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 18:9-14; Gal. 2:16; 3:11; Ephesians 2:8, 9. Salvation is the gift of God (Romans 6:23) and is received by faith (John 3:36; Ephesians 2:8, 9; 1 John 5:9-13). Anytime that works are tied to gaining or preserving salvation it becomes a salvation of works.

It is also necessary to make this distinction in order to live the Christian life successfully. Salvation may be likened to the foundation upon which the Christian life is built as a superstructure. To believe that the foundation is defective, that it must continually be shored up, and that it is in constant danger of disappearing altogether can be very discouraging.

ETERNAL LIFE

The Bible is emphatically clear on this point. God has promised to give eternal life to all who believe, John 1:12; 3:36. This life, or salvation, with all the benefits described earlier, is the present possession of all believers. John 10:28; 1 John 5:9-13.

Feelings are absolutely no standard whatsoever. Our feelings can be very deceptive and are irrelevant. The only standard is what God has said in His word. 1 John 5:13.

WHAT ABOUT MY FEELINGS?

Many earnest Christians confuse the witness of the Holy Spirit and their feelings. They believe, when they lose their “feelings” of assurance, that they have lost the witness of the Holy Spirit. The only conclusion they can draw is that they are not true believers. It is very important for us to recognize that the witness of the Holy Spirit is not some kind of feeling.

The “witness” is the Holy Spirit’s instruction to us that God has authoritatively spoken in His Word. John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-15; Romans 8:15, 16; Gal. 4:6; 1 John 5:9-13. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is not that of making the believer “feel” that he is a Christian or to give any ecstatic “feeling.” The Holy Spirit has been sent to bear witness of Jesus Christ and the Scripture and on that basis to lead the believer into the assurance of salvation. Therefore, the Holy Spirit “witnesses” within the believer that the Scripture is true.

To doubt God’s Word and work because of personal feelings is a very dishonoring thing to do. God is truth. He is the sovereign Lord. He is worthy of all trust and confidence. He has given us His Word. We must accept His Word, believe what He has said about us and our salvation. When we do so, we are cooperating with the Holy Spirit.

LESSON 5

THE DIVINE ASPECT OF SALVATION

Introduction: Understanding the biblical doctrine of eternal security also requires a proper understanding of God. In light of the fact that salvation centers around God rather than man, we must look at God's part in man's salvation. Understanding what the Bible teaches in this regard will confirm the eternal security of the believer.

THE ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER - CONDITIONS WHICH DEPEND ON GOD THE SON

The doctrine of security is based upon twelve undertakings of God for the believer, four of which are related to God the Father, four to God the Son, and four to God the Holy Spirit.

“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Romans 8:34

In this lesson we will study the four undertakings of Christ in behalf of the believer set forth in this verse.

THE SUBSTITUTIONARY DEATH OF CHRIST.

The term vicar refers to a deputy or agent who acts in the place of another. The word vicarious means that one takes the place of another, serving or acting as a substitute.

“It is Christ that died.”
Romans 8:34b.

All human beings, in their fallen state, stand as offenders against their Creator and His divine law. Consequently all owe an obligation

which can never be paid personally in time or eternity. Unless a vicar should intervene, there could be no hope for any member of this fallen race. However, no sin-laden human could be vicar for a fellow being. The vicar must be sinless as well as prepared to bear those immeasurable judgments which divine holiness must impose upon sin.

DEFINITION
***SUBSTITUTION: ONE TAKING
THE PLACE OF ANOTHER;
RELATED TO VICARIOUS
SUFFERING.***

There are two attributes of God which are at once involved when a person sins. These are justice and mercy. Justice imposes, and continues to impose, the full judgment which sin brings. Justice could never be softened or diminished in the interests of mercy. Because of His Holy character, God cannot look upon sin with any degree of tolerance or allowance. The truth is and remains; “the soul that sinneth, it shall die.” (Ezekiel 18:20) To contend that God could overlook a single sin because of mercy would make God responsible for the greatest mistake known in the history of the universe. You see, this would mean that the sacrificial, substitutionary, vicarious death of Christ was unnecessary. When Christ died at the hand of His Father as an offering and substitute for sin, it meant that there was no other way by which sinners could be saved. The Bible teaches, without deviation, that Christ by His death, met the demands of justice on behalf of the sinner (in the sinners place and stead), and those who will come unto God by Him are saved without the slightest infringement upon divine holiness.

Because of the value of His death being applied by faith on the part of a believer, no condemnation can ever be returned upon that one. 1 John 2:2

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The second Person of the Trinity was always present in Jesus Christ from the moment of His conception in the virgin's womb to His exaltation in glory; but His humanity presented ever-changing aspects. As a child He "grew, and waxed strong in spirit" (Luke 2:40). He Who was "from everlasting to everlasting" (Ps 90:2) came to be "thirty years of age" (Luke 3:23); and that body which was mortal, being subject to death, became immortal and He who was dead is now alive forevermore. He who alone has immortality (1 Tim 6:16) is now the first-fruits of resurrection, the only present representation in the presence of the Father of all the host of blood-bought redeemed ones who will soon be with Him and be like Him. Every power of Satan and man had combined to retain Christ's body in the tomb. The greatest earthly power had set its seal upon the tomb, but none could loose the "pains of death" (Acts 2:24) other than God. In Ephesians 1:20 it is revealed that the resurrection was due to the exercise of the Father's mighty power which "He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the Dead". This same mighty power, the Scriptures assure, is not only engaged to raise the believer from the dead, but is engaged in guarding and keeping the believer's position in Christ and accomplishing all that God has decreed for the believer.

*"Yea rather, that is
risen again."*

Romans 8:34c.

Every believer can now experience the life of Christ in the present because of the resurrection. His resurrection secured for all believers a spiritual resurrection that cannot be overturned or rescinded. The resurrection of Christ also became the guarantee of the believer's bodily resurrection as well. Colossians 2:12; Ephesians 2:5,6; John 3:16; 10:28.

THE APPEARING OF CHRIST AS ADVOCATE

The child of God is often guilty of sin which would separate him from God were it not for his advocate and what He accomplished in His death. When a christian sins he loses fellowship with God, as well as his joy, his peace, and his power.

“Who is at the right hand of God.”

Romans 8:34d.

These experiences are restored in infinite grace on the grounds that he confess his sin (1 John 1:9); but the Christian’s sin in relation to the holy character of God must not be overlooked. Through the present priestly advocacy of Christ in heaven there is absolute safety and security. An advocate is one who represents or pleads the cause of another in court. As advocate, therefore, Christ is now appearing in heaven for His own (Hebrews 9:24) when they sin. It is written, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not, and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (1 John 2:1). His pleading is with the Father as well as defending the believer before Satan. Satan never ceases to accuse the brethren night and day before God (Revelation 12:10). To the Christian, the sin may seem insignificant; but a holy God can never treat it lightly. It may be a secret sin on earth, but it is open scandal in heaven. The Psalmist wrote: “Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance.” (Ps 90:8). In marvelous grace, and without solicitation on our part, the Advocate pleads the cause of the guilty child of God. What the Advocate does in thus securing the safety of the believer is so in accordance with infinite justice that He is mentioned in this connection as “Jesus Christ the righteous.” He pleads His own effective, efficient, sufficient blood and the Father is free to preserve His child against every accusation from Satan or men and from the very judgments which sin would otherwise impose, since Christ through His death became “the propitiation for our (believers) sins” (1 John 2:2).

The appearing of Christ as Advocate in the court of heaven on behalf of the sinning Christian guarantees the security of the believer. In the very place where insecurity might find entrance, the Lord Himself appears before the Father and presents the fact of His own sufficient

sacrifice for that sin. The Lord Jesus Christ preserves the one that sins on the indisputable basis of the sufficiency of His work on the cross.

THE INTERCESSION OF CHRIST

This ministry of prayer on the part of Christ began before He left the earth (John 17:26), is carried on for the saved rather than the unsaved (John 17:9), and will be continued in heaven as long as His own are in the world (John 17:20).

"Who also maketh intercession for us."

Romans 8:34e

As intercessor, His work has to do with the weakness, the helplessness, and the immaturity of the saints who are on the earth. Christ intercedes for the believer in those areas over which he has no control.

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me for they are thine. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled. (John 17:9, 11b, 12).

The Lord Jesus Christ is presently interceding for the believer. Satan, all of his demons, and every man may condemn the believer, but God the Father will not give place to those accusations (Romans 8:34). He who knows the limitations of His children as well as the power and strategy of the foe with whom they have to contend, has become unto them the Shepherd and Bishop of their soul. His care of Peter is somewhat an illustration of this truth (Luke 22:31, 32). The priestly intercession of Christ is

ETERNAL LIFE

not only effectual, but is unending. The priests of old failed partly because of death; but Christ, because he ever lives, has an unchanging priesthood: “wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost (hence without limit and without end) that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (Hebrews 7:25). David recognized the same divine shepherding care and its guarantee of eternal safety when he said, “The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want” (Psalm 23). One of the four reasons in Romans 8:34 for the believers safekeeping is that Christ now “maketh intercession for us.” The effectiveness of the intercession of Christ in the preservation of each believer is declared to be absolute, complete, perfect and total.

As quoted above, “He is able also to save to the uttermost,” that is to save and keep saved forever those who come unto God by Him and this on the ground of His ministry of intercession.

MEDITATE ON THESE VERSES:

“When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only.” Job 34:29

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Hebrews 7:25

LESSON 6

THE ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER - CONDITIONS WHICH DEPEND ON GOD THE FATHER

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16.

THE SOVEREIGN PURPOSE OF GOD.

“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.” Titus 1:2.

“According to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our work, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” 2 Timothy 1:1b, 9

The three Persons of the Godhead in their foreknowledge, understood all that was to happen to man through sin. It appears that they agreed to provide a plan of redemption and agreed as to the part each would have in this undertaking. In the above verses it is said that God gave us grace in Christ even before the world began. The promise of eternal life took place as a result of a purpose fixed in times past (eternity). God chose to extend this eternal life on the basis of “whosoever believeth.” “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Romans 10:13). “And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17d).

THE FATHER'S INFINITE POWER

“He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in the faith giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform.” Romans 4:20, 21

The divine ability to bring a universe into existence out of nothing by volition or will is the supreme manifestation of power. Such power belongs to God alone. He is able to do whatever He wills, but He may not will to do the full measure of His omnipotence. His will is directed in the way of holy and worthy ends. He cannot contradict Himself. The power of God is truly almighty and measureless. It is staggering and awesome to consider a power from which all other power comes, and to which all power is subordinate (whether recognized or not); which nothing can oppose; which can conquer and annihilate all other powers; yet a power which operates in the most perfect manner. Yes, the omnipotence of our God is inconceivable, unfathomable and boundless. The power of God is inexhaustible.

How dare we, His creatures, doubt this Almighty God. May the realization of our audacity to question such a One grip our very being. He is worthy of all trust and confidence. We must take Him at His word. Note the way the word “able” finds its way into verses related to assurance and security.

“My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” John 10:29

“Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth, yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.” Romans 14:4

“Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.” Ephesians 3:20.

“For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” 2 Timothy 1:12.

“Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Hebrews 7:25

“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” Jude 24.

MEDITATE ON THESE VERSES:

“Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people. For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens. Honour and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Give unto the LORD, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name.” Psalm 96:3-8a

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” Psalm 27:1

Salvation is of the Lord! We sinful human beings cannot and do not have to maintain it. HE IS ABLE!

THE INFINITE LOVE OF GOD.

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John 4:9, 10

The Scriptures present at least three comprehensive descriptions of God, namely;

- (1) Spirit - “God is a Spirit” (John 4:24)
- (2) Light - “ God is light” (1 John 1:5)
- (3) Love - “God is love” (1 John 4:8)

By the word comprehensive it is meant that the terms Spirit, light, and love refer not merely to peculiar virtue, but that God is Himself precisely what these terms denote. God has not attained unto love, nor does He by an effort maintain love; it is the structure of His being. He is the unfailing source of all love. Without the attribute of love, God would not be what He is. Love is the primary motive of God and in love man and all creation was formed.

The love of God had its perfect manifestation in the death of Christ (1 John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 John 3:16).

God’s love is divine (John 15:9); God’s love is unchangeable, unconditional (John 13:1, loved despite failures, weakness, denials); God’s love knows no limits (John 15:13); God’s love is not fickle, shallow, or temporary. (Romans 8:35, 38, 39).

We cannot judge the love of God or compare the things God does by our finite, limited reasoning.

“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things.” Romans 8:32.

MEDITATE ON THIS VERSE:

“Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.” Isaiah 38:17.

The security of our salvation does not depend on a human love. It is sure and safe because of an infinite love. God’s love does not change. He does not give and then take away.

INFLUENCE OF THE SON’S PRAYER ON THE FATHER

“And now I am no more in the world, but those are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given me, that they be one, as we are.” (John 17:11)

God the Father hears and always answers the prayers of His Son.

“Father, I thank thee that Thou hast heard me. And I knew that Thou hearest me always; but not because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent me.” John 11:41c, 42.

God always honors His Son by hearing and answering Him. Would you belittle the importance of the prayers of Christ by believing that one can be saved and then lost again? Are the prayers of Christ of no value and no avail?

LESSON 7

RESPONSIBILITIES BELONGING TO GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit of God undertakes so much that the believer in Christ shall be safe forever. The Holy Spirit is the Divine Executor of much that the Godhead undertakes; however, as in the case of the Father and Son, there are distinct achievements wrought by the Third Person of the Godhead Trinity.

THE HOLY SPIRIT REGENERATES.

An earthly parent imparts an immutable nature to his child by human procreation. The Holy Spirit, at the moment of faith in Christ, imparts a nature to the believer which is also immutable. This is known as the new birth or regeneration.

The Lord Jesus Christ spoke of the new birth with a man named Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a Pharisee, a sect of the Jews, whose character was beyond reproach. Jesus said to him, "Ye must be born again." John 3:7. This was difficult for Nicodemus to understand and he asked, "How can a man be born when he is old," John 3:4a. "Jesus answered verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," John 3:5,6. Regeneration by the Holy Spirit brings about a new life in man - the very life of God.

That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
John 3:6

The primary reality of a christian, in answer to saving belief in Jesus Christ, is that the believer is regenerated and thus is introduced into a new estate, a new existence, a new relationship, which is defined as a new creation. This reality is secured, not by merit, but by divine

grace.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17 we read, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” The Apostle Paul also declares that “we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:10). This passage reveals the truth that, as a result of the divine workmanship, the Christian is no less than a divine creation - a form of being which did not exist before. That new being is said to partake of the “divine nature”; that is, God’s nature. This implies that the spiritual nature of the christian is as enduring as God, who is eternal. Similarly, the same Apostle writes: “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” Gal. 6:15

In the instance of human generation, a being originates who did not exist before and who will go on forever. In the same way, in spiritual regeneration a being originates which was not identified as such before and this being will go on forever.

An earthly father might disinherit and utterly abandon his son, but he cannot stop the son from resembling himself, and the reason is very obvious. It may be safely asserted that regeneration, as presented in the Scriptures, is an enduring actuality and the one who questions the eternal continuation of the Child of God, questions the process (and its result) by which he becomes a child of God.

When God is declared to be the Father of all who believe (Romans 4:11), reference is not made to a moral resemblance which a good life might suggest. Rather, it is a reference to legitimate Fatherhood and legitimate sonship grounded on an actual regeneration by the Holy Spirit. John 1:13; 1 Peter 1:23

THE HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLS.

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: But ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” John 14:16,17

ETERNAL LIFE

Before his death, Christ spoke these words of assurance and comfort to His disciples. The Spirit was not yet given when Christ spoke, nor could He be given until Christ was glorified (John 16:7). Notice specifically the promise, “That He may abide with you forever,” (John 14:16b). When the Holy Spirit of God takes up residence in the believer, His presence is never removed. He lives, abides or indwells there forever.

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters. (But this spoke He of the Spirit, which they believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified).” John 7:37-39

Christ promised that after His death and assent all who believe on Him would receive the Holy Spirit when they believed. It should be clear, the Spirit is received on precisely the same condition and at the same moment as salvation is received. Two separate operations of faith are not implied; the sole human instrumentality in salvation is believing. The complete salvation which is received and secured by faith includes the coming of the Spirit to indwell the one who is saved. The human condition for indwelling is believing and only believing.

Therefore, may we understand, the Holy Spirit is given to all who believe and when they believe.

“Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?” Acts 11:16-17

This passage records Peter’s account of the first preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles and their believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter says that the Gentiles, in the same manner of the Jews at Pentecost, received the Holy Spirit when they believed on Christ. The indwelling presence of the Spirit is God’s gift to those who believe.

“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” Rom 8:9

This declaration is dogmatic and final. If any man have not, (which means as an indwelling presence), the Spirit of Christ - distinctly a title of the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit comes from Christ and is sent into the world (John 16:7) - he is none of His. Please remember that a Christian is characterized by the fact that he has received the divine nature. No such being could exist in a Christian who does not possess the divine life which is essential to his newly created self. That new life is declared many times in the New Testament as the Holy Spirit.

“What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Corinthians 6:19,20

This passage answers completely those who contend that the Spirit is given only to a favored group, and especially does it answer the claim that He is given only to those who are yielded and faithful in their lives. The Corinthian believers were not very separated from the world and had a lot of problems. This letter says they were carnal (3:1-4), fornicators (5:1), disregarded their right relation to God and each other (6:1-8), yet they were being entreated to turn from their unholy ways on the ground of the fact that their bodies were temples of the Holy Spirit. The direct reason for calling for a holy life is that believers are already temples of the Holy Spirit. Therefore it is not a question of securing the Spirit by a holy life, but rather of a holy life being expected from one who has received the Spirit.

“This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” Gal. 3:2

The assurance given in this text is that the Galatians had received the Spirit in answer to saving faith. Thus it is taught again that the Spirit becomes the indwelling presence in every individual who is saved and at the moment he is saved.

THE HOLY SPIRIT SEALS.

There are three references to the sealing of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament.

“Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” 2 Corinthians 1:21,22

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.” Ephesians 1:13,14

“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” Ephesians 4:30

The believer in Christ is secure because he has been sealed by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit indwelling as an anointing is Himself the Seal. His presence in the Christian indicates a finished transaction, divine ownership, and eternal security.

An earnest is a partial payment which is given in advance and which guarantees the final payment, complete and full. The divine blessing which the presence and power of the indwelling Spirit secures, being an earnest, guarantees the full and final realization of God’s measureless provisions for the believer in glory throughout eternity. Not only does the gift of the Spirit, at the moment of Salvation, assure the fulfillment of every promise which God has made, but it indicates the character of that which is yet to come. His abiding presence assures the Christian since He Himself must indwell to be the Earnest which He is.

Ephesians 4:30 declares that the believer is sealed unto the day of redemption. The reference to the day of redemption is speaking of time when the body is changed into the likeness of the resurrected body of Christ (Romans 8:23). The sealed one is complete forever - even conformed to the image of Christ in glory.

The Spirit is the seal and the Sealer is God. Therefore, because the believer is divinely sealed, no one nor anything can break the seal. Remember that a seal indicates ownership, and once we are sealed with the Spirit we become the Lord's forever. The sealing is eternal (Ephesians 4:30).

It is important to realize that the saving and the sealing synchronize. The moment a believing sinner receives Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit enters as the evidence of a finished transaction.

Blessings innumerable are ours in and through the Spirit of God. May we not, however be taken up with blessings to the exclusion of the Blessor Himself. A subtle scheme of Satan is to have us occupied with a gift rather than with the giver.

LESSON 8

PASSAGES COMMONLY USED TO DISPROVE ETERNAL SECURITY

One of the greatest mistakes which leads to doctrinal error in Bible study is the failure to observe the seven biblical dispensations of time. Dispensations are periods of time in which God deals with man in a particular manner. In each dispensation, God remains the same yet his administration differs. These dispensations are:

Innocence	Ended at the fall in Eden
Conscience	Ended with the flood of Noah
Human Government	Ended with the confusion of tongues at Babel
Promise	Ended with the giving of the Law at Sinai
Law	Ended with the death of Christ
Grace	Ends with the second coming of Christ
Kingdom	Ends with the Great White throne judgement

Each dispensation is different and the student of the Bible must be careful to maintain that difference in mind. A failure to do so is failure to rightly divide the Word of Truth. (2 Timothy 2:15) This is most certainly the root of all doctrinal evil.

SCRIPTURES DISPENSATIONALLY MISAPPLIED.

Matthew 24:13 “*But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*”

Matthew chapter 24 verses 1-31 is known as the Olivet Discourse addressed to Jews. While on the Mount of Olives, the disciples asked Christ about the signs of His coming and the end of the world or ages. In verse 4 to 14, Christ gave a description of the character of the time. Verse 8 mentions the “beginning of sorrows.” This refers to a seven year period, after Christians have been raptured (taken out of the world), known as the tribulation period. Christians living now will not be present at this time. Some who have never heard the Gospel in this age of grace will hear it after all believers have been removed and will believe. The persecution that they will have to endure is almost beyond words. This will be the time when all on the earth will have to accept the mark of the beast in order to be able to buy and sell. Only those that can persevere or endure, as the passage says, will be saved.

Over against this, remember the Christian is now saved when he believes (John 3:36; 5:24). Had this address been addressed to Christians, rather than Jews, it would read, He that is saved will endure to the end (John 3:16; 10:28).

Matthew 18:23-35. This extended passage sets forth a law of forgiveness, namely, that the one who is forgiven should himself forgive. It must be remembered that Jews were being addressed. “Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants” (verse 23), is the key to proper interpretation of this passage. “Kingdom of heaven” is always earthly, while the term “Kingdom of God” is a spiritual kingdom. “Kingdom of heaven” is speaking of the millennial, earthly Messianic reign of Christ on earth. “The kingdom of God” is entered by a new birth (John 3:1-16). Believers will be in the “kingdom of heaven” and will rule and reign with Christ. Revelation 1:5; 20:6. They will be

The *Kingdom of God* is a spiritual kingdom.

ETERNAL LIFE

kings and priests. Israel was offered the opportunity of this position, but rejected it (Exodus 19:5-6). The Gospel of Matthew was written to the Jews, and Christ was presented as a king and His kingdom was offered. "The Kingdom of heaven" as announced and offered in the early part of Matthew's gospel was accompanied by demands for personal righteousness in life and conduct. This is not the principle of grace; it is rather the principle of law. Kingdom teaching extends into finer detail than the law of Moses and never ceases to be the very opposite of the principle of grace. Law conditions its blessings on human works, grace conditions its works on divine blessings. Law says "If ye forgive, your heavenly Father will also forgive you," and in that measure only. (Matthew 6:14-15). Grace says, "Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:32). So, again, law says "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20). This is not a present condition for salvation. Present conditions are wholly based on mercy: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us." (Titus 3:5).

The literal, visible kingdom of Christ was the hope of the nation of Israel. Israel's kingdom was faithfully offered to them by their King (Jesus Christ) at His first appearing. However, the Scriptures are very clear -- He was rejected. The kingdom was rejected and manifested by the murder of John the Baptist and the crucifixion of the King.

To make what is distinctly said of the King in relation to the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:23) to apply to believers presently is a confusion of the truth. To make the mere act of forgiveness to be equivalent to eternal salvation is a gross error. There is no contradiction in Scripture. We finite, puny men, limited in our intelligence, understanding and reasoning, are the ones with a problem -- not the Word of God.

A MERE REFORMATION OR OUTWARD PROFESSION.

Luke 11:24-26, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he

findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.”

The Lord here was presenting truth related to demonology which is not related here to salvation. A person with a demon may be prayed over for release from a demon and truly experience that release. However, the expulsion of a demon is not salvation. The next step certainly must be salvation -- if that person is to continue to experience freedom. However, if they do not receive Christ, then they have no defense. The demon will return but greater in power and number.

The removal of a demon is not the equivalent of salvation. When a person places their faith in Christ and receives Him as Lord and Saviour, the divine nature is imparted. This never occurred in this situation.

1 Corinthians 15:1, 2 “Moreover, brethren, I declared unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain.”

The Apostle Paul is not implying that some of the Corinthian believers were lost for want of faith after believing; rather it is that their faith had never been sufficient for salvation. A Christian should not fear the examination of their faith (2 Corinthians 13:5). Make sure of what you did when you professed trust in Christ. A profession alone is not salvation. Salvation is relying completely (trusting, confiding, totally convinced) on Christ and nothing else whatsoever. It is all of Christ or nothing.

Hebrews 3:6, 14, “But Christ as a son over His own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” “For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.”

In both of these verses there is but one thought that stands out -- namely, that the genuine endures and that which fails is false because it was never true. Mere profession can be very deceiving. Many will be

ETERNAL LIFE

greatly shocked when the Lord appears and they find that they were never truly saved. (Matthew 7:21-23) One can be very religious but very lost. One can be ever so sincere and still be sincerely wrong. One can trust his good works, give lip adherence to Christ and the Gospel, and still die and go to hell. “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not of us” (1 John 2:19). The “going out” indicates that those who go out “are not of us,” and they go out that this, so very important fact may be made “manifest.” Those whose faith has never been real will not continue but will turn aside. “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His” (2 Timothy 2:19).

Hebrews 6:4-9 “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance: seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh off upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. But that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.”

This passage refers to the case of professed Jewish believers who stop short of faith in Christ after moving to the very point of faith in Christ. It never says here that they had faith.

It has been assumed that the five items which appear in verse 4 and 5 are a description of a saved person and therefore it is possible for a Christian to “fall away.” Without a doubt, these five things are true of a child of God. However, there is even more than what is mentioned here. It is possible for one to be born in a Christian home and be exposed to the Bible and church - “enlightened,” but never truly trusting Christ as their only and all-sufficient Saviour. As compared to those “unenlightened,” the believer is “light in the Lord,” and is a child of the light (Ephesians

5:8). Compared to “tasting the heavenly gift,” the Christian has received eternal life and to him righteousness has been imputed. As compared to being made a partaker of the Holy Spirit as an unsaved person does when enlightenment with respect to sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11), the believer is born of the spirit, indwelt, and sealed by the Holy Spirit. As compared to those who merely taste the powers of the world to come, the believer experiences that transforming power, which was in Christ, raising Him from the dead. The illustration which follows is clear (vs. 7 and 8). Sunshine and shower on soil which brings forth herbs is nigh unto blessing, while sunshine and shower on soil which brings forth briars and thorns is nigh unto cursing. In like manner, the salvation appeal to the Jews, as addressed in this passage, could bring forth blessing or cursing. It depended on their decision.

The controversy over this passage should be cleared up by noting the term “beloved” (a term used only of true believers -- not pretenders). Apparently the preceding five things do not refer to the saved. It should be pointed out that the impossibility of repentance is not due to a withdrawal on the part of God of the offer of salvation, but is due to the unsaved person’s rejection of the one and only way that is open to him. If at any time he accepts the way set before him, he will be saved; for “whosoever will may come.”

Hebrews 10:26-29, “For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace?”

The letter of Paul to the Hebrews (to Jews first of all) had two purposes. The first was to confirm Jewish Christians by showing that Judaism had come to an end through the fulfillment of Christ of the whole law. The second purpose of this letter was to reveal a danger to the professing Jewish believers. These were tottering and about to lapse

Eternal Life

back into Judaism (with the law and sacrifices still practiced), or had stopped short of the true faith in Jesus Christ. They faced a very real danger after having been exposed to truth in Christ.

Many Jews had become convinced that the Lord Jesus Christ was the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, yet the majority were not willing to leave Judaism and all its practices. This passage does not say that they had received Christ, but had received knowledge of the truth. They still believed they had to keep the law.

Verse 29, is a very solemn warning to those who feel that the work of Christ on the cross and His blood is not sufficient alone to save. This is very offensive to God. It is an insult to the Son of God. This is to walk on the Son of God and to treat His precious blood as an unholy thing.

The Apostle Paul's heart was broken and burdened for his own people. About this time he also wrote Romans 10:1-4: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth".

Christ is sufficient! No more sacrifices of animals or works are necessary for salvation. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (Hebrews 10:26b). The person who still holds on to the belief that some religious act or ritual must be added to faith in requirement for salvation has never submitted "unto the righteousness of God." The Catholic mass, the repeated breaking of the body of Christ and the repeated shedding of His blood, is a condemnation by the very act of all involved, that they do not believe that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." There are many other ideas about

**Christ is
sufficient!**

doing things to maintain one's salvation.

PASSAGES RELATED TO THE FALSE TEACHERS OF THE LAST DAYS

“Last days” refers to the time near the end of the Christian era, the age of grace. This is the time immediately preceding the removal (rapture) of believers from the earth and the introduction of the tribulation into the world. These “last days” are characterized by false teachers. These false teachers are never said to be saved, and because of the influence of their wickedness on so many people, they bring swift destruction upon themselves.

1 Timothy 4:1, 2. “Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.”

Here it is revealed that men of leadership in many churches will, in the latter times, turn from that system of doctrine which is termed “the faith,” and substitute in its place doctrines of demons. These are not believers who become unregenerate apostates. These important persons, having had some understanding of the “the faith” (Jude 3), reject it to the extent that they turn from it and embrace in its place different and strange doctrines. Verse 2 is a pitiful, tragic but clear indictment of the actual condition of these people. The notion that some once saved are lost again, receives no support from this scripture.

2 Peter 2:20-22. “For if after they have escaped the pollution of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”

This passage is an identification of false preachers. They are said in 2 Peter 2:1-19 to be those who bring in heresies, they discount past

ETERNAL LIFE

divine judgments, they despise angels and authorities, and they have turned aside from right things. These, having escaped the pollution of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, not through the acceptance of Christ as Saviour, are indebted to Christ for much truth. The truth that has been revealed to them, they forsake and pervert. Many, many people have been born in good Christian homes and have lived in nations founded on Biblical principles where the ethics of Christianity have raised the morals of living. They may have had the privilege of an education in Christian institutions but yet never acknowledged their debt by the personal acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. How many have turned to the pollution of the nations that know not God, and how much worse is their state, than if they had never known the way of righteousness? Light and knowledge increase responsibility.

These people's nature was unchanged. They have never been born again, or received a new nature, and become a new creation in Christ. It is not that they were saved and then lost their salvation. They never were truly saved.

Matthew 7:20-23. "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name: and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Here in this passage are people who, from all visible appearances, were "serving God." However, the Lord says "I never knew you." To them, perhaps even ordained ministers, was committed "the way of righteousness" and the "holy commandment"; yet they had never trusted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. They did not lose their salvation, because they never had anything to lose. Jude 3-19.

LESSON 9

A TRUE SALVATION IS PROVED BY ITS FRUITS.

Fruit is the normal expression of a genuine regeneration - a reasonable test of that regeneration. On the other hand, it must be recognized that it is also possible for a Christian to be out of fellowship with Christ. In such a state there will be no fruit borne. Both lines of truth -- that salvation is to be tested by its fruits, and that a believer may be for a time out of fellowship with his Lord -- are sustained in many passages of the New Testament.

John 15:6 "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." (1 Corinthians 3:13)

The real question at issue in this passage is whether Christ, by His use of the figure of the vine and the branches and His call for an abiding life, is referring to the Christian's union or the Christian's communion with Himself.

The context (verses related either preceding or following) reveals that Christ is dealing with the Christian's communion with Himself, which communion depends on human faithfulness.

Please note verse 2, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away."

It is distinctly a branch in Him, which is in union with Him, that is not bearing fruit. Union with Christ does not depend on fruit bearing. God does remove from this life Christians who are consistently unfaithful (1 Corinthians 11:30; 1 John 5:16c). However, in verse 6, it is essential to note the phrase "men gather them and cast them into the fire." We must say that if a believer does not abide in Christ, he will come under the condemning judgment of people. The believer's testimony to and before the world becomes as a branch "cast forth" and "withered." The

ETERNAL LIFE

judgment of the world upon the believer with an inconsistent walk and testimony is described in very severe terms. You may have the thought here, “How is it that men can burn each other?” The language is highly figurative, for men do not in any literal sense burn each other, but they do abhor and repel an inconsistent profession. This passage and its context witnesses to the truth that communion, which depends on the believer, may fail but it does not declare that union, which depends on Christ, has ever failed or ever will fail.

Union with Christ is a result of the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, by which divine operation believers are joined to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 6:17; 12:13; Gal. 3:27). That eternal union with Christ does not, and could not, depend upon human effort or merit is a fundamental truth throughout the Scriptures.

James 2:17-18, 24, 26. “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works... ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only... For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

The entire context must be considered which is James 2:14-26. Also, there are two sides of a coin to be considered. We must consider God’s view point of justification and man’s viewpoint of justification before this passage can be correctly interpreted.

The Apostle Paul declares the truth in Romans 5:1, that the requirement on the human side for justification before God is faith; but the Apostle James declares that the requirement on the human side for justification before men is good works. Men cannot know hearts; they only judge what they can see. This world judges and rejects the profession of a Christian which does not meet its ideals in respect to what a Christian should be.

The Scriptures do stress that the reaction of the world to a Christian’s testimony is of vital importance. In fact, the believer is commanded to “walk in wisdom toward them that are without” (outside the family of

God - Colossians 4:5). Many unbelievers have been made to “stumble,” when they were considering Christ, because of the inconsistent life of a “Christian.”

This passage we have considered by James lends no support to the claims that believers are insecure.

BELIEVERS MAY LOOSE THEIR REWARDS.

There is very definitely a doctrine of rewards. However, it must be clear that salvation is not a reward. “Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Romans 4:4-5). Rewards are given to the saved -- not to the unsaved. Rewards are not for salvation but because of the faithfulness of those already saved. “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love.” (Hebrews 6:10a). The works of the believer will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ in heaven -- and only the saved will appear there. The subject will be that of eternal rewards -- not whether a person is saved or not.

2 Peter 1:10, 11. “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make you calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

The exhortation first of all is to make our calling certain, or to make sure that we have been converted to God. It is the same kind of reasoning which we employ in tracing out the cause by an effect. God has elected to salvation those who chose to believe on Christ. The operation of divine grace at the moment of faith in Christ is the regeneration of the soul. This is a proof of our calling and election. The Christian cannot “fall from salvation” because of His position in Christ. His safety depends on God -- not himself.

An abundant entrance (note phrase -- abundantly into the everlasting kingdom - v. 11) is more than a mere entrance. It is speaking of reward for faithfulness added to entrance into that kingdom.

ETERNAL LIFE

To make sure (as in v. 10) is to ascertain, to render a thing certain in the mind. The regenerated person will experience sorrow and burden over sin in his life - something of which the unregenerate is not conscious (1 John 3:4-10; Ps 32:3-5). It is therefore designed of God, even though the believer at the moment may be out of fellowship with God because of unconfessed sin, so that the believer will have clear evidence that he is saved.

Without the assurance of salvation, the believer cannot effectively serve God. When there is doubt or uncertainty, there is fear. Fear paralyzes and chokes service. Satan manipulates things in such a way to keep believers from truly serving God. If a person mistakenly believes that works are necessary for salvation, or to maintain salvation, his motive will not be correct in service to God. Such a person will glorify himself and not God. Thus service is done in the flesh, or carnally and has no reward from God! Service for God must be done in the power of God. This is only possible through a person saved and indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God.

“But I keep my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”
1 Corinthians 9:27

This verse is dealing with service for Christ -- not about the danger of losing salvation. In verse 18, Paul asks the question, “What is my reward then?”

Do not forget that a believer has a standing before God (Eph 1:6) and is accepted and justified (Romans 5:1). As for his service, or that which man does for God (which is possible only after salvation), he must yet appear before the judgment seat of Christ. There, the believer's service will be tried - that which has been done in the flesh will be burned and that which was done in the power of God and for His glory will be rewarded. (2 Corinthians 5:9, 10; 1 Corinthians 3:15).

Paul was not concerned about being a “castaway” in relationship to salvation. He knew his own flesh and weaknesses. He recognized that he could commit sin that could make him ineligible for service to Christ.

CHRISTIANS MAY FALL FROM GRACE.

Galatians 5:4 “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

By popular usage the idea of falling from grace, though mentioned but once in the Bible, has been made to include all who are supposedly lost after having been saved. Christians may fall from grace, but it is not accomplished by sinning. The Apostle Paul wrote the epistle to the Galatians who had allowed false doctrine to creep into their churches. Through the teaching of some, that salvation was partly through faith and partly by good works, some people were confused. Others were teaching that salvation was through faith but to maintain salvation or stay saved, it had to be done by good works.

Paul sets forth several arguments. He asks the question in Galatians 3:2, “Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” The Holy Spirit comes to indwell the believer at the moment of faith in Christ (Ephesians 1:13).

Then in Galatians 3:3, he asks another question, “Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” It should be clear then, that Paul declares two important truths, namely; (1) that the law system or works is not a means to salvation, and (2) that the law system does not provide the rule of life for those who are saved by the grace of God.

The law by its very nature demands that the one to whom it is addressed, establish personal merit before God. Therefore, it cannot have any application to the one who, being in Christ, has the perfect merit of the Son of God. The liberty to which the Apostle refers and for which he exhorts the Christian to stand fast (Gal. 5:1) is the very freedom from an unbearable yoke of merit obligation. To turn from the blessing of grace provision of all that is in Christ to the assumption that merit must be secured by human works, is to fall from grace. Christ becomes of no effect, to the extent that His perfect merit which grace provides is ignorantly abandoned for that which is a bondage to an intolerable merit system, but there is no intimation that his salvation is sacrificed. Instead

ETERNAL LIFE

he loses his joy and peace and the power for true service to Christ.

“I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” Galatians 2:21

“O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the

MEDITATE ON THIS VERSE:

“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Galatians 2:16

works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” Galatians 3:1-5

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles

through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” Galatians 3:10-14

“Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.” Galatians 4:8-10

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” Galatians 5:1-4

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” Galatians 6:15

LESSON 10

CONCLUSION

THE PROMISES OF GOD MUST BE CONSIDERED AND BELIEVED.

The person that will not accept the Word of God is in essence saying that God is a liar. “He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because He believeth not the record that God gave of His Son.” (1 John 5:10b). “The record” refers to the Word of God. Can you accept the promises of God?

“And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My Hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” (John 10:28, 29). The believer, according to verse 28, is in the hand of God the Son. Christ is the second person of the Trinity and is all powerful. There is no force more powerful, not even Satan or one’s own self. “They shall never perish” is the actual, literal promise of the Lord Jesus Christ. He also promises “neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” The believer is not only in the hand of God the Son, but is in the hand of God the Father. Look at John 10:29 again carefully. “My Father... is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” A person cannot even remove himself from the hand of God the Father.

There may come a time of special trial or even depression in a believer’s life, where for a time he may doubt or question his own belief. “If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself” (2 Timothy 2:13).

MEDITATE ON THIS VERSE:

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” Numbers 23:19

A person cannot keep himself. The one that thinks he can does not understand or know himself. Man’s flesh is weaker and more deceptive than any human being can realize. God knew and understood all about man when he designed salvation. There is no way one can “hold out,” “hold on” or “be faithful to the end.” However, salvation is of God and reverently speaking, God has taken it as His responsibility to keep the person who has placed his faith and trust in His Son. “Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” (Jude 24).

“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6). God does not do things halfway. God always finishes what He starts. Salvation is a “good work” that God will fulfill and complete. Other verses to be studied are Jude 1, 1 Peter 1:5; John 6:39; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10, 14; 2 Timothy 4:18; Psalm 37:28; John 6:37; Hebrews 12:2.