

# “THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

## Once Saved, NOT Always Saved

Contrary to the Calvinistic error known as “Once Saved, Always Saved,” the Bible teaches, Once Saved, Not Always Saved. Another name for this error of Calvinism is “Perseverance of the Saints” – the “P” in the TULIP doctrine (“T” – Total depravity, “U” – Unconditional Election, “L” – Limited Atonement, “I” – Irresistible Grace, and “P” – Perseverance of the Saints).

In the book titled, *The Five Points of Calvinism, Defined, Defended and Documented*, by David N. Steele, Curtis C. Thomas, S. Lance Quinn, Second Edition, 2004, on pages 64 and 65, it says, “*The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints does not maintain that all who profess the Christian faith are certain of heaven. It is saints—those who are set apart by the Spirit—who persevere to the end. It is believers—those who are given true, living faith in Christ—who are secure and safe in Him. Many who profess to believe fall away, but they do not fall from grace for they were never in grace. True believers do fall into temptations, and they do commit grievous sins, but these sins do not cause them to lose their salvation or separate them from Christ.*”

The very idea of persevering implies that one can change for the worse and not persevere in a stated purpose. If “*True believers do fall into temptations, and they do commit grievous sins, but these sins do not cause them to lose their salvation or separate them from Christ,*” how is this persevering? The *American Heritage Dictionary* online defines the word “persevere” as “*to persist in or remain constant to a purpose, idea, or task in the face of obstacles or discouragement.*” How is a Christian committing grievous sins, persevering? If a Christian sins, are they remaining constant in the grace and teaching of the Lord? Can a Christian depart from the Lord (Heb. 3:12)? Yes! Remember, sin is defined as “*all unrighteousness*” (1 Jn. 5:17); “*transgression of the law*” (1 Jn. 3:4) and Paul wrote, “*the wages of sin is death*” (Rom. 6:23).

The Bible clearly refutes the “Once Saved, Always Saved” false doctrine. Please consider the following passages:

**Galatians 5:4** - In Paul’s letter to the Galatians (who were formerly in the grace of God) he wrote, “*Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace*” (Gal. 5:4). Paul said, “*ye are fallen from grace*” because they sought to be “*justified by the law.*” How can one fall from a place they have never been? Let the Calvinist explain that. How can you fall from a tree if you were never in the tree? How could one fall from a ladder if they were never on the ladder? Paul gave the reason why they had “*fallen from grace*” by stating that “*Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law....*” Justification comes by “*faith*” in Christ (Gal. 3:11; 25-26); by obeying the truth (Gal. 3:1); by being “*called...into the grace of Christ*” through belief and obedience to the gospel Paul preached (Gal. 1:6-9).

**2 Peter 2:20-22** - In Peter’s second epistle he wrote, “*For if after they have escaped the pollutions 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.*”

The “*they*” in this passage are false teachers who previously had “*obtained like precious faith*” (2 Pet. 1:1) but have returned to their former sinful state and rejected the gospel and taught error. Those who hear, believe and obey the gospel and return to sin and error are described by Peter as those who “*are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.*” Without repentance and confession of one’s sins to God, such individuals are unforgiven and lost (1 Jn. 1:9).

These two passages of scripture sufficiently defeat the insidious false doctrine of “Once Saved, Always Saved.” Lest anyone want more passages than these two, read and consider the following scriptures which warn saints and sinners of the danger of sin and error – 1 Peter 5:8; 1 Corinthians 10:8-12; 15:1-2; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:5; James 5:19-20; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; 4:10; 5:8, 12-15; Acts 8:13, 18-24; John 15:5-6; Hebrews 2:12-13; 6:4-6; 10:38-39;

12:15; James 5:12; Colossians 1:23; Revelation 3:16. Why these warnings from the inspired New Testament apostles if the doctrine of "Once Saved, Always Saved" be true? – *tgmc* ■

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## HUMBLING OURSELVES BEFORE THE LORD

By Jim Stauffer

***"Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you" (Jas. 4:5-10).***

There is considerable difference in the translations on verse 5. The KJV reads, ***"Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?"*** (Jas. 4:5 cf. Gen. 6:5) Either way you choose to go with this verse it presents a similar picture. If indeed it is saying He, that is God, desires the Spirit He has made to dwell in us or you conclude it means the spirit that dwells in us lusts to envy, the bottom line is we are strongly desired by our Creator to become united with Him through the message of the Holy Spirit while at the same time we battle against the temptations of Satan which He deals with in the following verses.

He then tells us how to accomplish that which will please Him and enable us to benefit from the grace of God brought down from heaven to mankind (Phil. 2:5-8; Titus 2:11-14). And the way He tells us to do that is by humbling ourselves as the Lord did. We need to set aside our pride as He did in leaving heaven to lead an earthly life fraught with suffering for a cause originated in the heart of God Who loved us in spite of our sin. Peter tells us the same thing James does as both seem to reference Proverbs 3:34, where it is said, God scoffs at the scoffers but gives grace to the afflicted.

There is this thing of divesting ourselves of pride and we do that, James says, by submitting to God. Jesus tells us the depth of commitment there is to submitting to Him. In Luke 9:59-62, He recounts the story of two different men who offered to follow Him. Notice following Him is the definition of submitting to Him. In 1 Peter 2:21-24, the apostle recounts for us the great sacrifice and suffering the Lord went through on our behalf and how we are to then follow in His steps. These two men proved unworthy to become followers of the Lord when they each for different reasons wanted to return to their family before going with the Lord. Submitting to the Lord is not a verbal communication. It is reflected in our conduct. We must from the heart make a change in our thinking. We can no longer satisfy our pride. We cannot fulfill our lusts of the flesh. We cannot think like we did before.

When we submit to the Lord, we naturally resist the devil. He is the adversary of the Lord and His disciples. When we resist the devil because we are committed to the Lord, he will flee from us. The cleansing of the hands and purification of the hearts accomplishes His desire for us to be single minded. We cannot have alliances with the world if we are to submit to Him. The one who does this will indeed be turned to mourning for the condition of the world and the suffering the disciple must endure in his effort to carry the good news of salvation to that lost and dying world. In mourning and weeping there is conveyed the concept that following the Lord is not some kind of party as you may see as you watch some televangelist promise the world to his viewers. It is rather a solemn and serious task we as His people must undertake to be able to say as Paul did, ***"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing"*** (2 Tim. 4:7-8).

This, brethren is what we have "signed" up for. He has made us great promises and His promises are true. ***"For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust"*** (2 Pet. 1:4). ***"This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life"*** (1 Jn. 2:25). We then must make a great commitment in order to receive those promises. And that commitment is humbling ourselves before the Lord and that promise is that He will then exalt us. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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