



ETERNAL SECURITY

R. E. Harlow

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One

The Good News

God saves us by faith alone because
the Lord Jesus died for us.



“In the beginning, God....”

It is good to start with God, as the Bible does in the first verse. The Bible teaches also, In the end, God. And God is all the way between. God is the greatest Person in the universe. Men try to live as if there were no God, but this is both wrong and very dangerous. In fact, it is fatal.

God created man and He surely knows what is best for us. He has the right to tell us what we must do. But also He loves all men and commands us not to do wrong to one another.

God's enemy came in and deceived the mother of all mankind. She and her husband sinned when they disobeyed God's command. So all people have the same nature as our first parents, a sinful nature.

But God created man and made us able to choose what is right or what is wrong. Long ago it became clear that all men are guilty sinners. We chose to follow our first parents and God's great enemy. The penalty for sin is death, Genesis 2.17; Ezekiel 18.4; Romans 5.12; James 1.15; Revelation 21.8.

God cannot rule the universe unless He treats all His creatures fairly and righteously. He must punish men for sinning against Him. But He still loves all men. How can God be righteous and yet forgive sins?

He could remain righteous if some one else would die for any man, as a substitute. But all men have sinned and so must die each for his or

her own sins. Even a perfect man could die for only one other man. Many angels are without sin, but they are spirits, they have no body, they cannot die. Animals are not sinners, but no animal has a life equal in value to a human life.

Of course, God had the answer to this problem before He created any person. His plan was no less than to send His own Son to become a Man and then to die for all other men. The Son was without sin. His life is the life of God, He is equal with God. By laying down His life He became the Substitute for all men. God was very pleased with the perfect life and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. God raised Him from death and declares to all men that He is our Savior.

The Good News is that the sacrifice of Christ is completely sufficient in itself to save any sinner still alive in this world. There is nothing I have to do, the work is all done. There is nothing I could do to improve on what Christ has done. His work was perfect, God accepted it, the Bible says I am forgiven and free. He gave His life to redeem many people, Matthew 20.28.

Will you believe it? It is indeed Good News for any sinner.

Two

The Gift of God

He gives us eternal life as a gift which He will never take back. The Father gave us as a gift to His beloved Son; He will certainly never take this back. The Son keeps us as His own.



God is love and love gives. The Bible teaches that God gives:

Eternal life	Romans 6.23
Authority to become sons of God	John 1.12
The true Bread of Life	John 6.32
An inheritance for eternity	Acts 20.32
His own Son, and all things	Romans 8.32

What does the Son of God give?

The water of life	John 4.10,14; Revelation 21.6
Life	John 6.33
Light	Ephesians 5.14
Rest	Matthew 11.28
Peace	John 14.27; 2 Thessalonians 3.16

God and God the Son give us life which is eternal life, John 3.16; 6.51; 10.28; 17.2; 1 John 5.11. It is not life for a short time, it is life forever.

God's gift is free; it cannot be bought, Romans 5.15-18. His great gift is so wonderful that words cannot describe it, 2 Corinthians 9.15. God first gave His greatly beloved Son in order to give us eternal life. No one could buy or pay for God's Son.

God gives, and never takes His gift back again, Romans 11.29. He will never change His mind or demand that I should return to Him the gift He has given: eternal life through His Son. It would be a great insult for anyone to say, "I don't want your gift, take it back again." God will not take it back, even if anyone did say such a thing. But if man refuses the gift, God will not force him to accept it.

The gift of God is eternal life.

God loves and God gives. God loves men, but still more important is this: God loves His Son, as we learn in John's gospel.

1. God has given all things to His Son, 3.35.
2. God shows His Son everything which the Father does, 5.20.
3. God loves His Son still more because the Son gave His life for us, 10.17.
4. The Son loves us in the same way as the Father loves Him, 15.9.
5. The Father loves us in the same way as He loves His Son, 17.23.
6. God loved the Son before He created the world, 17.24. 7. The Son wants the Father's love to be in us, 17.26.

We have seen that Love gives. God loves us, gave His Son, and gives us eternal life. What does the Father give to His Son to show His love for Him? We read that God gave the Son to have life in Himself, and authority to judge all men. In fact, He gave all things to His Son, John 3.35; 5.26,27. But here we want to think about God's great gift to His Son: people.

1. God's will is that the Son should not lose any of those whom the Father gave to Him, John 6.39.
2. The Father is greater than all and no one can ever steal them away from Him, John 10.29.
3. The Son has authority to give eternal life to all whom God has given Him, John 17.2.
4. These people belong to God and He gives them to His Son, John 17.6.

5. Still they are God's, and the Son promised to pray for them, John 17.9.
6. The Son prays that God the Holy Father would keep His own, John 17.11.
7. Here on earth the Son kept all His own. Judas was with the eleven apostles, but he never really believed in Christ, John 17.12. The Lord knew this all along, Luke 6.16; John 6.71. Judas never called Jesus Lord, always Master or Teacher.
8. The Son prayed for these people to be with Him in heaven and to see all His glory there, John 17.24.

In these verses we see that Christ considers us to be a special love gift from His Father, and promises never to lose any of those who truly believe in Him. We can be sure that He will keep all His promises, and that God will answer all His prayers.

ETERNAL SECURITY
GOOD NEWS AND THE GIFT OF GOD **Chapters 1, 2**
TEST 1

Enter the correct answer.

1. The righteous God can forgive sins
 - a) if the sinner dies for sin;
 - b) if a perfect substitute dies for sin;
 - c) if a perfect animal dies for sin.

2. God is love and gives us eternal life,

 - a) 1 John 5.ii;
 - b) Acts 20.32;
 - c) Ephesians 5.14.

3. God loves men
 - a) less than He loves His Son;
 - b) more than He loves His Son;
 - c) in the same way as He loves His Son.

4. God gives believers as a gift to His Son
 - a) but many will be lost;
 - b) and the Father and the Son can keep them safe;
 - c) but Satan has stolen some true believers from the Lord.

5. The Son prays for
 - a) all men;
 - b) His own;
 - c) only those who walk straight.

Enter TRUE or FALSE.

6. God was in the beginning and will be in the end.
7. All men have a sinful nature but some women are better.
8. Rich men could pay God for His Son.
9. God's great plan was to send Michael the archangel to die for men.
10. It is possible to accept the gift of eternal life, then return it to God.

What Do You Say : What is the good news?

Three

Life is Eternal

Eternal life has no end,
even as God Himself has no end

God gives eternal life to those who believe. What does eternal mean?

God gave natural life to Adam and Eve, Genesis 2.7, but sin entered and therefore death entered too. God made the tree of life in the Garden of Eden, but He put Adam and Eve out of the garden so they could not eat the fruit of that tree. Human life ends in death because of sin, but God opens the way to the tree of life again because of Calvary, Revelation 2.7; 22.2,14. At first some men lived very many years, (for example, Methuselah, Genesis 5.27). After the Flood, some lived to be over one hundred years, but eighty was a good old age for most people, Psalm 90.10.

Now God gives eternal life.

Daniel 12.2 Men will be buried in the earth, Genesis 3.19, but Christ will raise them up, some to eternal life, some to judgment.

John 3.15,36 Believers will have eternal life.

John 4.14 Christ gives the water of eternal life.

John 5.24 Believers will have eternal life and will not come into God's judgment.

John 6.40 The Father's will is that every believer will have eternal life.

- John 6.47 The Son of God said very truly the believer already has eternal life.
- John 10.28 The Good Shepherd will never let His own sheep be lost again.
- Romans 5.21 God's grace shall rule in righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. God is love, but He cannot save anyone unless He does it righteously, see Chapter 1. Now He can give eternal life, and He will never take it away again.

We see this same word "eternal" in:

- Isaiah 45.17 Salvation is eternal, (and Hebrews 5.9)
- Isaiah 54.8 God's kindness is eternal.
- Jeremiah 31.3 So is His love.
- 2 Timothy 2.10 We will have eternal glory.
- Hebrews 9.12 Christ obtained eternal redemption for us.

The same word or words are used in the Greek New Testament for:

- The existence of God, Romans 16.26;
- The glory of God, Romans 11.36; 16.27; Ephesians 3.21; 1 Timothy 1.17; 1 Peter 5.10;
- The honor and power of God, I Timothy 6.16;
- The kingdom of Christ, Luke 1.33; Hebrews 1.8; 2 Peter 1.11;
- The glory of Christ, Galatians 1.5; 2 Timothy 4.18.

So our eternal life will last as long as God lives.

I must tell you that Hell will last just as long, 2 Thesalonians 1.9; Hebrews 6.2; Jude v.7. We should warn people about this.

Four

The Promise is Certain

God promised with an oath that we will never perish or die, and He cannot break His Word.



God has promised to give us eternal life. Can we take that promise as being certain, or is there some way for God to break His Word?

God gave great promises to Abraham, and Abraham believed that God would do what He said. He promised to give him a family who would own the land of Canaan, Acts 7.5. Abraham believed that God was able to do what He promised, Romans 4.21.

Think of what He has promised. Those who believe will:

NEVER	thirst again,	John 4.14;
	hunger	6.35
	see death,	8.51;
	perish,	10.28;
	die,	11.26.

God has promised the believer that He will

NEVER	throw him out,	John 6.37;
	count sin against him,	Romans 4.8;
	remember his sins again,	Hebrews 8.12; 10.17;
	leave him or abandon him,	Hebrews 13.5;
	put him to shame,	1 Peter 2.6

(In some Bibles, these verses may have the word “not”, but in the Greek New Testament, there are two words meaning “not”, so we may

properly say “not, not”, or never.)

Making a covenant is a strong way to make a promise. God made a new covenant with His people Israel and now He brings all believers into it. Read Matthew 26.28; 1 Corinthians 11.25; Hebrews 9.15; 10.16; 12.24; 13.20.

This is according to His great eternal purpose, which He Himself planned before He created anything. Read carefully Romans 8.28; 9.11; Ephesians 1.9,11; 3.11; 2 Timothy 1.9.

Among men, making an oath is more important than just saying that you will do something. So God swore with an oath to Abraham, Luke 1.73; Acts 7.17; Hebrews 6.13,17; and to David, Acts 2.30. Jehovah swore with an oath to Messiah that He would continue as a Priest in the order of Melchizedek forever, Psalm 110.4; Hebrews 7.21.

It is very solemn to read also that God swore to the sinners of Israel that they would never enter into His rest, Hebrews 3.11,18; 4.3.

We can be sure that God cannot lie, Titus 1.2. He is always faithful to His Word, Hebrews 10.23; 11.11. He promised the Good News long before Christ or the apostles came, Romans 1.2. His promises are great and precious, 2 Peter 1.4. For us the greatest promise is the gift of eternal life, 1 John 2.25.

But there are others also:

a crown to the victor,	James 1.12;
a kingdom to those who love Him,	James 2.5;
a new heaven and earth,	Hebrews 12.26-28; 2 Peter 3.13.

God has never broken His Word or His promise, His covenant or His oath. It is an insult to God to say, I still cannot believe.

ETERNAL SECURITY
LIFE IS ETERNAL Chapters 3, 4
TEST 2
The Promise Is Certain

Enter the correct answer.

1. Which will last longer?
 - a) eternal life for believers;
 - b) judgment for sinners;
 - c) both the same.

2. Anyone can get eternal life
 - a) when he or she is born and baptized;
 - b) when a person believes;
 - c) after death.

3. God will never
 - a) remember our sins;
 - b) save a really guilty sinner;
 - c) keep any one from entering His rest.

4. The strongest thing God can do to really persuade men is
 - a) say what He will do;
 - b) promise to keep His covenant;
 - c) swear with an oath.

5. God loves man and wants to save him, but
 - a) He can only do it righteously;
 - b) He reserves the right to throw some out;
 - c) He can only save those who do their best.

Enter TRUE or FALSE.

6. Many insult God by disbelieving what He has said.
7. Adam and Eve were created with eternal life.
8. There are many examples where God broke His word.
9. With eternal life, you will be judged as a sinner.
10. I can be sure that eternal life is mine forever.

What Do You Say

Why should we trust God's word?

Five

Justify the Guilty?

As Judge of the world God can justify sinners because the Lord Jesus Christ has died for us.



We have seen that God is righteous yet He wants to have sinners with Him as His sons. How can God treat a sinner as if he had not sinned? How can God justify wicked people?

The Bible says we are:

- justified by grace, Romans 3.24. This is the basis of God's dealings with men. He gave us life, He has the perfect right to take it away again if we do not obey Him. But He is full of grace.
- justified by blood, Romans 5.9. Only death can pay for sin, but God has provided a perfect Substitute, His own Son, who died on the cross for us.
- justified by faith, Romans 3.28; 5.1. See also Galatians 2.16; 3.8. The sacrifice of God the Son is sufficient for all the sins of all men, 1 John 2.2, but only those who believe will get the benefit and be justified. This is the opposite to justification by works, Romans 3.20; Galatians 5.4.

Justification is possible through the righteousness of Christ, His perfect obedience in His life and in His death, Romans 5.18. We can be sure because God accepted His sacrifice and raised Him from death, Romans 4.25.

To justify does not mean:

1. to be righteous, because no man is righteous in God's sight,

Romans 3.10;

2. to make righteous, because the word is used of God, Luke 7.29; Romans 3.4, but God always was and always will be perfectly righteous.

The word "justify" really means to show that someone is righteous.

In the Old Testament, the believer could know that his sins were "covered" or "forgiven", Psalm 32.1; Romans 4.7. But justification is still greater. A man in Israel could bring his sacrifice and believe that God forgave him, Leviticus 4.26,31,35; 5.10,16,18. But he might soon fall into sin again. Then he would need another sacrifice to be forgiven again. See Hebrews 9.9; 10.1,2.

Now the Lord Jesus has shed His blood in the great Sacrifice. God is now able to justify men through faith. This means that He does not count us as sinners any more at all. He counts us as "just" or righteous, Romans 4.6,8,11, as He did Abraham when he believed God's Word, Romans 4.22,23. God declares us to be "not guilty", but only because Another has paid our debt. Now no one can lay a charge against us, Romans 8.33, because God the Supreme Judge justifies us.

One name for Satan is Devil, which means "the accuser," Revelation 12.10. He accused Job before the throne of God, Job 1.10; 2.4,5. Now he cannot lay any charge against God's people.

Christ died for our sins, and He rose again for our justification, Romans 4.25. Therefore God can be and can remain perfectly righteous, and yet justify sinners, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 3.26.

The Lord Jesus told a parable about two men who went to the temple to pray. One man was very religious, the other was a great sinner. The religious person told about his own works in keeping the law. The other man called himself "the sinner" and just asked God to show mercy to him. The second man went back home "justified," Luke 18.14.

The religious Jews once brought a sinful woman to the Lord. The religious men were all guilty of sin and so they were not really able to condemn her. Only Jesus was without sin, but He knew that the woman repented, so He said to her that He would not condemn her, but she should not sin any more, John 8.2-11.

The Lord Jesus did not come to this world to condemn everyone. He

came to save us, John 3.17. As guilty sinners we were already under condemnation, John 3.18; Romans 5.18, but there is no condemnation for all who are in Christ Jesus, Romans 8.1.

Beside justification, God gives us other blessings: He makes us clean, sets us apart for Himself, and gives us glory, Romans 8.30; 1 Corinthians 6.11. Only Christ can give us the power to “go and sin no more.” He is the Savior you need.

Six

Christ is Our Advocate

If we fall into sin,
we still have Christ as our Advocate.



Our Lord Jesus Christ finished His great work on the cross. He gave His life so that He can give us eternal life. Now He is in heaven on God's throne, still working for us, His people. There are five words in the New Testament which describe His work at this present time.

1. Mediator, 1 Timothy 2.5. Many men have felt their need of someone to come between themselves and the Most High and Holy God, Job 9.33. Christ is both God and Man, and He is the only Mediator whom God will recognize. He is quite sufficient. We do not need any man or woman, saint or angel, to come between us and Christ. He is God. He knows everything, He can do anything, and He loves us each one, Galatians 2.20. Why should we go to some one else? It would mean that Christ is not good enough.

The Lord Jesus is the one Mediator of God's new and better covenant, Hebrews 8.6; 9.15; 12.24.

2. He is also our Great High Priest, Hebrews 4.14, not like Aaron and his sons, who all died. Christ now lives forever in the priestly order of Melchizedek, Hebrews 7.15-17. As Priest, He prays for us all the time, Hebrews 7.25.

3. The Good Shepherd died for the sheep, and rose again, John 10.9-11. Now as the Great Shepherd, He leads, feeds and keeps the sheep, Hebrews 13.20,21. He is also the Chief Shepherd, 1 Peter 5.4, and we must obey Him.

4. Again, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Bishop or Overseer of all churches, 1 Peter 2.25. In Revelation 2 and 3 we see Him and hear His words to the seven churches, praising them for what is good, warning them about what was wrong. He is still in charge and expects all believers to act according to His will.

5. The Lord Jesus is our Advocate, 1 John 2.1. It is God's will that His children should never sin, and as Priest, Christ is praying that God will keep us from all evil, John 17.15. But no believer can say that he never falls into sin, 1 John 1.8. If and when we sin, Christ acts as our Advocate with the Father. Just when I need Him most, He does not leave me alone, Hebrews 13.5. He stands up for me and keeps me in good relation with God.

If you are called before a judge, it is good to have someone who will stand up for you, a lawyer or attorney. Jonathan tried to defend David when King Saul wanted his men to kill him, 1 Samuel 19.4; 20.32. The Lord Jesus Christ is our Advocate, but the Spirit here calls Him also, the "Righteous." The holy Lord will not pass over sin lightly, but He Himself paid the price, 1 John 2.2, and so He is able to keep us in a right position before God.

He is able to keep us from falling, Jude v.24, but when we do, He does not forsake us. He continues to act as our Advocate and He will present us perfect before God's throne.

The word "Advocate" also means "Comforter", and is used of the Holy Spirit, John 14.26; 15.26; 16.7. So we have the Spirit within us, and the Savior on the throne of God.

ETERNAL SECURITY
JUSTIFY THE GUILTY? Chapters 5,6
TEST 3

Enter the correct answer.

1. Men can be justified
 - a) by grace;
 - b) by blood;
 - c) by faith;
 - d) all three of the above.

2. To justify anyone means he
 - a) is righteous;
 - b) has been made righteous;
 - c) is declared to be righteous.

3. Christ has finished His work
 - a) on the cross;
 - b) of interceding for us;
 - c) as Bishop of all His churches.

4. As the Chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ
 - a) died for our sins;
 - b) leads, feeds and keeps His sheep;
 - c) will give crowns of glory.

5. Christ is able to keep us from falling but when we do
 - a) He will forsake us;
 - b) He will stand up for us;
 - c) He will lead us into temptation.

Enter TRUE or FALSE.

6. Satan can still accuse believers before God.
7. God can set aside His righteousness and justify those who believe.
8. Christ alone can forgive us and give us the power to sin no more.
9. The perfect Mediator is both God and Man.
10. Justification is better than forgiveness.

What Do You Say

What does the word 'justify' mean? How is God able to *justify* men?

Seven

Christ is the Shepherd

The Lord is also our Shepherd. He is able to keep His sheep and protect us from every enemy.



In the Old Testament, people kept sheep and cared for them. Many great men were shepherds, for example; Abel, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and Amos.

In many ways people are like sheep and we need a shepherd. What would a shepherd do for his sheep?

1. Give them water to drink, Genesis 29.2; Exodus 2.16;
2. Feed them, Genesis 30.31; 1 Samuel 17.15; 1 Chronicles 4.39; Isaiah 40.11; Ezekiel 34.2,15;
3. Lead them, Psalms 77.20; 78.52,53;
4. Guide them, Psalm 78.52;
5. Protect them, 1 Samuel 17.34,35;
6. Keep them, Genesis 4.2; Exodus 3.1; 1 Samuel 16.11; Jeremiah 31.10;
7. Build enclosures for them to rest in safely, Numbers 32.16.

Sheep without a shepherd have trouble, Numbers 27.17; 1 Kings 22.17; 2 Chronicles 18.16.

1. The enemy may come against them, even men pretending to be shepherds, Ezekiel 34.28; Jeremiah 23.1.
2. The sheep may wander away, Isaiah 53.6; Jeremiah 50.6; Ezekiel 34.6; Zechariah 13.7.
3. Then the shepherd goes out to seek for his sheep, Ezekiel 34.12.
4. He gathers them together again, Jeremiah 23.3.

So Shepherd is a wonderful Name for our Lord Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament we read that Jehovah Himself would come to save His sheep:

- He will come with all His strength, feed His flock, carry the little lambs in His arms, and gently lead the sheep, Isaiah 40.10,11.
- He will gather His sheep and bring them back to their home.
- He will set up shepherds who will feed them and protect them, Jeremiah 23.3,4.
- He will punish the false shepherds, Ezekiel 34.2-10, search for His scattered sheep, bring them home, feed them, give them rest, 34.11-16.
- He will save them and put one Shepherd over them, 34.22,23.

This one Shepherd is our Lord Jesus Christ:

- He was the Good Shepherd and gave His life for the sheep, John 10.11.
- He is the Great Shepherd, through whom God is providing us with all we need to do His will, Hebrews 13.20,21.
- He will appear as the Chief Shepherd to give rewards to those whom He chose as shepherds or elders to care for His sheep, 1 Peter 5.4.

PSALM 23

1. Jehovah is my shepherd
2. green pastures
leads me
3. restores my soul
(brings me back)
4. walk through the valley of death
fear no evil
5. prepares a table
enemies
6. goodness and mercy all my life
house of the Lord forever

JOHN 10

16. There shall be one Shepherd:
30. I and my Father are One.
9. shall find pasture;
shall go in and out.
27. hear my voice, follow me.
28. eternal life;
will never perish
9. pasture
5. stranger
8. thieves and robbers
12. hireling, wolf
28. eternal life;
never perish

David was a shepherd who cared for his father's sheep before he became king of Israel. The Spirit of God led David to write Psalm 23, and later He led John to record what the Lord Jesus said about Himself as the Shepherd.

In Psalm 23 David spoke about himself and about the Lord, but the Good Shepherd gave His life for the sheep and will gather all God's people together, John 10.15,16,17.

Have you heard His voice? Are you following Him? If so you have eternal life and will NEVER perish. He said so. He has never told a lie, or made a promise which He will not fulfill. So believe Him, give Him thanks, and rejoice.

Eight

Christ is the Bridegroom

The Lord Jesus as the Bridegroom
will not let His Bride get away from Him.



In Ephesians the Holy Spirit tells us much about the Church of Christ. We learn that:

The Church is like	Christ is
His Body	the Head of the Church, 1.22,23;
His Building	the Chief Corner Stone, 2.20-22;
His Bride	the Bridegroom, 5.25-27.

Ephesians 5 teaches us about a Christian husband and wife, but we learn also about Christ, who:

at present	is the Head of the Church	v.23
	is the Savior of the body	v.23
	is Lord (all should obey Him)	v.24
in the past	loved the Church	v.25
	gave Himself for the Church	v.25

In John 3.16, God loved and gave; in Galatians 2.20, Christ loved and gave. In Ephesians 5 we read the same: Love gives.

at present	sets the Church apart for Himself	v.26
	makes it clean by God's Word	v.26
in the future	will present it to Himself	v.27
	as a perfect Bride	v.27
at present	feeds it as His Body	vs.29,30
	takes care of it as His Body	vs.29,30

In heaven there will be no weddings for men and women, Matthew 22.30. The great event will be the Wedding Supper of the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, and His Bride, the Church, Revelation 19.6-9.

v.6 John heard a great voice of very many people giving praise to the Lord God because He has all power and will reign forever.

v.7 These people are very happy and give honor and praise to the Lord God. Why? Because the time has come for Christ to take His Church to Himself as His Bride. He has been waiting for that time, which finally arrived. The Bride has made herself ready, and He has been preparing her to present her to Himself, as we noted in Ephesians 5.27. Rebekah put on her veil when she was about to meet her husband Isaac, Genesis 24,64,65. Esther was a whole year getting ready for King Ahasuerus, Esther 2.12-18.

v.8 The bride always wants to be beautifully dressed. The Bride of Christ will wear clean, white linen, a picture of the many righteous acts she has done. The priests had to put on linen clothes when they went in to serve the LORD, Exodus 39.27-29,41. We should put on the “new man” like clothing, in righteousness and holiness, Ephesians 4.24; also in kindness, humbleness and love, Colossians 3.10,12-14. Believers today can prepare for this Wedding by obtaining white clothing, Revelation 3.4,5,18.

v.9 The Church includes all who believe in the Lord from the day of Pentecost to the time of the Rapture, and these form the Bride of Christ. But there are many other believers who trust in Him – some who lived before the Church age began, some who will live during the Great Tribulation. These are the guests who are invited to the Wedding Supper. They will rejoice also as John the Baptist did, John 3.29.

So at present the Lord Jesus Christ is protecting His Bride, caring for her and preparing her for the great Day. Jacob served seven years for his wife Rachel, Genesis 29.18. Othniel fought a battle with the Canaanites in order to get his bride, Achsah, Judges 1.12,13. David and his men fought the Amalekites to get back their wives, 1 Samuel 30.2,17-19. Christ died on the cross for His Church, and paid the great price for her.

We can be sure that the Son of God is quite able to
keep His Bride safe no matter how hard the enemy tries
to rob Him of His joy.

The Lord Jesus attended a wedding in Cana of Galilee and added to

the joy of the guests there, John 2.8. His own great joy is still future. No one will be able to spoil His pleasure at that time. Satan would like to steal some of His children, but the Lord Jesus is able to keep us all safe until He comes.

Abraham sent his faithful servant on a long journey to get a bride for Isaac. The servant protected the bride through the long dangerous journey and brought her safely to her husband. This is a picture of the Father who sent the Spirit of God to gather out a Bride for His Son. Indeed we have seen that the Lord spoke of His disciples as a gift from His Father, John 6.37; 17.2,9,11,24. He will not let any of us slip from His powerful hand.

Nine

Sealed by God's Spirit

God has given us His Holy Spirit to keep us
and to teach us that we are His forever.



We have seen that eternal life is the gift of God and that His promises will certainly be fulfilled. The Son is our Advocate and the Shepherd of God's sheep, and also the Bridegroom caring for His beloved Bride, the Church. Now we ask, What does the Scripture teach about the work of the Spirit of God in bringing His children home to heaven?

First, what does the Spirit teach about Himself in the Bible? The Holy Spirit is God just the same as the Father and the Son are God. Read these verses:

	God	The Spirit of God
Holy	Isaiah 12.6	Acts 1.8
Spirit	John 4.24	1 Peter 1.11
eternal	Psalm 9.7; 10.16	Hebrews 9.14
everywhere	Deut. 4.39; Jeremiah 23.24	Psalm 139.8-11
knows all things	Acts 1.24; Rom 16.27	1 Corinthians 2.10,11
can do anything	Psalm 8.3; Jeremiah 32.17,27	Job 33.4; Psalm 104.30
righteous	Romans 1.17; 2.5; 3.21-26	John 16.8-11
gracious	1 Peter 5.10	Hebrews 10.29
truth	Psalm 31.5; Isaiah 65.16	John 15.26; 1 John 5.6

God's Spirit is called the Holy Spirit 92 times in the New Testament. You see that He is fully equal with God the Father and God the Son, Matthew 28.19; 2 Corinthians 13.14. He was called God in Acts 5.3,4.

Lying to the Holy Spirit was lying to God.

God the Father and God the Son give us God the Holy Spirit to dwell in every true believer for ever, John 14.16,17,26; 15.26. Praise His Name!

Now we will consider some of the work of this wonderful Person, the Holy Spirit of God, on behalf of the believer. The Holy Spirit:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. gives him new life from above | John 3.5 |
| 2. makes him a blessing to others | John 7.38,39 |
| 3. gives him the power to worship God | John 4.24 |
| 4. dwells in true believer | 1 Corinthians 3.16; 6.19 |
| 5. teaches him the truth | 1 John 2.20,27 |
| 6. sets him apart for God | 2 Thessalonians 2.13; 1 Peter 1.2 |
| 7. fills him for service | Acts 2.4; 4.8,31;
6.5; 7.55; 9.17;
11.24; 13.9,52. |

There are two words which teach us that God gave us the Holy Spirit so we can be very sure that we belong to Him: one is seal and the other is guarantee or earnest, and these words are found in five verses: 2 Corinthians 1.22; 5.5; Ephesians 1.13,14; 4.30.

The word seal is used to prove something belongs to the right owner: treasure, Deut. 32.34; a field, Jeremiah 32.10. It is used to prove that a letter or law is correct, 1 Kings 21.8; Neh. 9.38; Esther 3.12; 8.8. The stone was sealed to show authority, and the right to control, Daniel 6.17; Matthew 27.66.

The other word guarantee is used for money given in advance as a sure promise that the rest will be paid later, Genesis 38.17-20. Judah promised Jacob that he would give his life as a guarantee that he would bring his young brother Benjamin back home, Genesis 43.9; 44.32.

In Ephesians 1, we learn that:

- God marked us out in advance, according to His own plan, and for His own glory, vs.11,12;
- He sealed us with the Holy Spirit, as He promised, when we believed in Christ, v.13.

The seal proves that we belong to God, because the Seal is the Holy Spirit, who is God. The Father sealed the Lord Jesus Christ to prove that He was God's Son, John 6.27; and He will seal thousands of His witnesses in the Great Tribulation, Revelation 7.3.

The Holy Spirit seals us to prove that we belong to God, until the day when the Lord takes us home to heaven, Ephesians 4.30.

Always remember that the One dwelling in us is the Holy Spirit, and be careful not to commit any sin, because this would make Him sad.

We read again that He has sealed us with His Spirit, 2 Corinthians 1.22. And more still, God has anointed us with the Holy Spirit, 2 Corinthians 1.21. (See also 1 John 2.27 and John 14.26).

This same verse (2 Corinthians 1.22) says that the Spirit is the earnest: God's promise that we will some day receive the full blessing of our salvation. In 2 Corinthians 5.5 we learn that God has given us the Spirit so we can know for sure that we will have new bodies when Christ comes, vs. 1-4. In Ephesians 1.14 also the Spirit of God is the earnest, the first part of God's wonderful gift, and the guarantee that He will fulfill His promise to give us our inheritance.

What have we learned in these first nine chapters?

1. God saves us by faith alone because the Lord Jesus Christ died for us.
2. He gives us eternal life as a gift which He will never take back. The Father has given us as a gift to His beloved Son, a gift which He will never take back. The Son keeps us as His own.
3. Eternal life has no end, even as God Himself has no end.
4. God promised with an oath that we will never perish or die, and He cannot break His word.
5. As Judge of the world He can justify sinners because the Lord Jesus Christ has died for us.
6. If we fall into sin, we still have Christ as our Advocate.
7. He is also our Shepherd. He is able to keep His sheep and protect them from every enemy.
8. The Lord Jesus as the Bridegroom will not let His Bride get away from Him.
9. God has given us His Holy Spirit to keep us and to teach us that we are His forever.

We have a wonderful Savior! But there is still more to learn about Him. If you are really saved on Sunday, you are still saved on Monday. But other things happen on ordinary days. Let us see what the Bible teaches about these things.

ETERNAL SECURITY - TEST 4
CHRIST, SHEPHERD AND BRIDEGROOM Chapters 7-9
Sealed By God's Spirit

Enter the correct answer.

1. God's sheep hear the Lord's voice
 - a) and follow strangers;
 - b) and may be stolen by robbers;
 - c) and will never perish.

2. The Church is
 - a) the Body and Christ is the Bridegroom;
 - b) the Building and Christ is the Chief Corner Stone;
 - c) the Bride and Christ is the Head.

3. Which verse shows that we are sealed by the Spirit and He is the Earnest?
 - a) 2 Corinthians 1.22;
 - b) Ephesians 1.13;
 - c) Ephesians 4.30

4. The Bible teaches that
 - a) The Bridegroom may leave His Bride before the Wedding Day;
 - b) Eternal life is God's gift to believers for a short time;
 - c) The Spirit is the Guarantee that we are saved.

5. The Holy Spirit
 - a) dwells in all true believers;
 - b) leaves those who fall into sin;
 - c) gives us the new life but may take it away again.

Enter TRUE or FALSE

6. Jehovah Himself is our Shepherd.
7. The Bridegroom is keeping and caring for His Bride.
8. Believers can prepare for the great Wedding Day by righteous living.
9. The Holy Spirit is eternal and equal with God.
10. Satan can spoil Christ's Wedding Day by stealing part of the Bride.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Can you say 'The Lord is MY Shepherd? If so, Why?

Ten

Parental Chastening



We have seen that God gives eternal life to every believer and He will never take it away again. Some people suppose that this means they can do as they please. They understand that they have been saved by faith, not by keeping God's law, so therefore they think that they can break God's law.

Not so.

It is true that you belong to God's family and the Father will never throw you out. It is equally true that you must act like a child of God. If you don't, the Father will have to teach you some hard lessons. They may even be very hard.

Read these seven verses in Hebrews, 12.5-11. Then read them again.

First notice the words "son" and "father" in verses 5,7,8,9. God is speaking here about His true children. He is saying that He needs to teach them lessons, as a father on earth teaches his children. This is called "chastening," and this word is found eight times in these seven verses, once in every verse, and twice in verse 7. It is very important to understand what the Bible teaches about the Father's chastening.

1. Why does God chasten us? Because He loves us. The Lord chastens those whom He loves, v.6. Of course God loves all men, but He chastens only His sons. He does this to all of His sons, and daughters.

2. He chastens us for our own good. Even our own fathers chastened us when we were little, v. 10.

3. How does God chasten us? He uses different methods – for example, He sometimes allows sickness or sorrow. These verses in Hebrews tell us that it will be hard: chastening causes us sorrow, v.11. In fact it may be

like a whip or a scourge, v.6. The cruel Roman soldiers used a scourge when they beat the Lord Jesus, John 19.1, and they almost did the same to Paul, Acts 22.24,25.

4. How long will this chastening last? Until the believer comes back to the Lord, confesses his sin, and stops doing that sin any more. Our natural father may chasten us for a few days, v.10, and God the Father will not let us suffer any more than He sees is necessary.

5. What should I do when the Lord starts to chasten me? I should ask the Lord to show me my sin, then confess it and stop doing it. I should accept this trouble as from the Lord and respect Him by obeying, as sons should do to a human parent, v.9.

6. In what wrong ways do some believers act when God the Father chastens them? Some just say that this trouble is not important, they despise it by not accepting it as from the Lord, v.5.

Others faint, that is, they think that the punishment is too hard, and they suffer and complain, not giving God the honor, or repenting of their sin.

7. What are the results for those who accept their suffering as the action of their loving heavenly Father?

- a. They can rejoice to know that they are truly sons of God, because He chastens only His own.
- b. They will live, not die, even if they become very sick. Verse 10 says we should be subject to the Father and live. They have eternal life as a gift from God.
- c. They learn to hate their sins and become more holy, more like their Father, by sharing in His holiness, v.10.
- d. The trouble will make them bear fruit and will result in more peace in their hearts. It will also make them more righteous in their lives, v.11. This means that they will be able to know better that certain things are sins in the sight of their Father. It is much better to know these things and to avoid them, than do them and then to come under God's chastening. This is better than learning the hard way that they are wrong.

David was a man of God who fell into great sin, 2 Samuel 11.4; 12.9. At first he would not admit that he had done anything wrong. He told

Joab that in a battle anyone may get killed, 2 Samuel 11.25. But God spoke to him and gave him no rest until he confessed his sin, Psalm 32.3-5. Nathan the prophet told him that God would punish him but that David would not have to die for his sin, 2 Samuel 12.13. David asked Jehovah not to take away the Holy Spirit, (because people in the Old Testament did not have all the truth which is revealed in the New). But he did not ask the Lord to give him again his salvation; he asked the Lord to return the joy, because this is what he had lost, Psalm 51.12.

If a true son of God falls into sin, the Father in His love will chasten him until he repents. Often the Father uses some sickness to bring us back to Himself. Prayer will show us what we have done against the Lord. He will forgive us and heal us, Psalm 103.3; James 5.15. This also applies to those who sin by teaching what is not true, James 5.19.

We should pray for one another. But even so sometimes a true son of God will not repent. In that case God may just take him out of this world and home to Heaven. He does not take away his eternal life, He takes away his natural life. For example, some believers can sit with others and act as if they were remembering the Lord in breaking bread. Some in Corinth did this and as a result some got sick and some died, 1 Corinthians 11.30.

(The word "sleep" is a beautiful picture of death for a believer, Matthew 27.52; John 11.13; Acts 7.60; 13.36; 1 Corinthians 15.6,18,20,51; 1 Thessalonians 4.13-15; 5.10; 2 Peter 3.4. We will rise from death, like waking up in the morning.)

For a believer, death is the way to enter Heaven and to be with the Lord, Philippians 1.23. This is much better, it is not punishment for sin. But it means the end of our great opportunity to serve Him and to earn a reward. God does not want to have His children in this world if they go on in their sins and disgrace His Name. They are His children, their home is in Heaven, so He takes them home.

But people die, believers die, everybody dies, and we must not say that it is because of sin. Only God knows. The same thing is true of sickness. In my own situation, I ask the Lord if I have done anything wrong, but there are other reasons why a believer may get sick or have great trouble or sorrow:

- a) to help him serve God better;
- b) to keep him from getting proud;
- c) to answer Satan when he accuses him;
- d) so he can help others who have great trouble;
- e) so he can share in the sufferings of Christ.

a) A Christian is like a branch in the True Vine, the Lord Jesus Christ, John 15.1-5. He should bear fruit for the glory of the Father. If the branch does not bear fruit, the Father will take it away. If it does, He will make it clean so it will bear more fruit. The Father makes us clean by removing some of the things which keep us from fully following the Lord. He may do this by sickness or loss.

b) God gave the apostle Paul many revelations of His glory but He did not want His servant to become proud about this. So He allowed Satan to give Paul some painful condition, perhaps bad eyes, which Paul called a thorn in the flesh, 2 Corinthians 12.7.

c) Satan asked for the opportunity to test Peter, and God gave it to him, Luke 22.31. Peter did deny the Lord, but he repented at once, and so Satan was defeated. Perhaps Peter had been a little proud, Luke 22.33. Pride is the sin of Satan, 1 Timothy 3.6.

d) God gave real comfort to Paul and Timothy in their trouble. One reason for this was so that they would be better able to comfort others when they had trouble, 2 Corinthians 1.4.

e) We belong to Christ, who is rejected by the world at this time. It is our privilege to share in His sufferings by accepting the hatred of the world, Philippians 3.10. If we do, we will be very glad when He comes in His glory, 1 Peter 4.13.

So we see that God will not allow His true child to go on in sin. But there are other reasons also for suffering.

ETERNAL SECURITY - TEST 5 PARENTAL CHASTENING Chapter 10

Enter the correct answer.

1. A child of God may fall into sin,
 - a) but the Father will punish him;
 - b) and lose his eternal life;
 - c) and be thrown out of God's family.

2. Chastening
 - a) proves that the Lord loves me;
 - b) shows that I am not really His child;
 - c) makes me want to sin some more.

3. When the Father chastens me I should
 - a) despise it, since all men have to suffer;
 - b) faint, because it is too hard;
 - c) admit my sin and stop doing it.

4. If I see a brother suffering or in trouble
 - a) I know that he must be living in sin;
 - b) it may be that God wants to use him still more;
 - c) this proves that he is resisting the Lord.

5. Paul suffered
 - a) and prayed many times that God would heal him;
 - b) and learned how to comfort others;
 - c) and became proud of his spirituality.

Enter TRUE or FALSE

6. When you are saved by faith you can do as you please.
7. David fell into sin and repented at once.
8. David asked the Lord to give him his salvation again.
9. Some in Corinth refused God's chastening and died.
10. For a believer, death is the worst form of punishment.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Who does God chasten? Why does He chasten?

Eleven

Salvation

— Past, Present, and Future —



People ask you, Are you saved? and you say, Yes, I was saved on that wonderful day when I accepted Christ as my own personal Savior.

This is correct, but many people do not know that the believer is being saved every day at the present time, and will be saved completely on a great day when Christ comes again. Let us consider now our Salvation, Past, Present and Future.

1. Salvation, Past

You already know the great verses on salvation, such as:

Acts 16.31, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and any others in your family;

Romans 10.9, Confess Jesus as Lord...believe in your heart...you are saved.

There are other verses which teach us that we are saved when we first believe in Christ:

Today salvation has come to this family, Luke 19.9;

By grace you have been saved, through faith, not by works, Ephesians 2.5,8,9;

God has saved us, 2 Timothy 1.9;

According to His mercy He saved us, not for our good works, Titus 3.5.

2. Salvation, Present

The death of Christ has saved us from the guilt and punishment of

our sins. But we still have bad habits which would lead us into sin against the very One who saved us from sin.

GOOD NEWS!

The same Savior is able to save us from the power of sin in our lives today. His power is available to save us from our sinful habits every hour of every day. God does this through His Word and through His Spirit:

His Word

James 1.21, God plants His Word in our hearts and this is able to save us day by day. The Son of Man sows the good seed, Matthew 13.37.

John 17.17, The Father sets us apart for Himself through His Word, which is the Truth.

Ephesians 5.26, Christ is washing His church clean by the Word.
2 Timothy 3.16, The Scripture is useful for correcting our faults and teaching us how to live righteously.

Psalms 119:105, God's Word guides me like a lamp in a dark place. It keeps me from sin, Psalm 119.11.

The Spirit works in us also:

He sets us apart as holy, and for God, 1 Corinthians 6.11; 2 Thessalonians 2.13; 1 Peter 1.2.

We can gain victory by the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, Ephesians 6.17.

The Lord Jesus Christ is our Advocate and He helps to save us every day from the power of sin. Look back at Chapter 6.

We are children of God. How should we act as children?

We should:

have simple faith as a child, Matthew 18.3;

give praise to the Father as children, Matthew 21.16;

not think about evil things, as children, but we should try to understand Scripture like adults, 1 Corinthians 14.20;

not be like children who can use only milk, the simple truths of Scripture. We should grow up and learn deeper truth, which

is more like adults who can eat meat, 1 Corinthians 3.1,2;
Hebrews 5.13,14.

Knowing the Bible will help us and others to know that we are being saved from sin every day.

3. Salvation, Future

People can be truly saved yet they may fall into sin. This is because they still have the old nature as well as the new life from God. So there is a struggle in each one of us. Will this go on forever?

The good news is: NO. The Lord is coming back to give us new bodies like His own. Then we will have no more temptation to sin.

Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed, Romans 13.11.

Our salvation is ready to be revealed in the last time, 1 Peter 1.5.

We have the hope of salvation yet to come, 1 Thessalonians 5.8.
This salvation will bring eternal glory, 2 Timothy 2.10.

Christ will appear the second time for salvation, Hebrews 9.28,
to finish His great work. This will not be to deal with the
sin question, because He put away sin forever on the cross,
Hebrews 10.12.

He will change our bodies to make them like His own, Philippians 3.20,21.

Read these verses carefully and prayerfully and you will see that our Savior is still working for us, and will finish His work when He comes again.

ETERNAL SECURITY - TEST 6
SALVATION Chapter 11
Past Present and Future

Enter the correct answer.

1. Which verse teaches us about our past salvation?
 - a) By grace you have been saved through faith;
 - b) Thy word have I hid in my heart;
 - c) Put on as a helmet the hope of salvation.

2. Which verse teaches us about our present salvation?
 - a) Acts 11.14;
 - b) 1 Peter 1.5;
 - c) Ephesians 5.26.

3. Which verse teaches us about our future salvation?
 - a) Hebrews 9.28;
 - b) Luke 19.9;
 - c) Hebrews 7.25.

4. The Lord said to the woman, "Go and sin no more", John 8.11. This is
 - a) Salvation past;
 - b) Salvation present;
 - c) Salvation future.

5. Saving our souls, James 1.21 and 1 Peter 1.9, is
 - a) Salvation past;
 - b) Salvation present;
 - c) Salvation future.

Enter TRUE or FALSE

6. God saves us because of His mercy and our good deeds.
7. As believers we should act like children and like adults.
8. The Holy Spirit helps to save us by giving us victory.
9. Our inward struggle will go on for ever.
10. The Saviour washes our feet, John 13.10. This is present salvation.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Our salvation is secure, but in what ways is it not complete?

Twelve

Rewards



We have seen that salvation is free and eternal life is the gift of God which He will never take away. Why then should a believer live a good life and please the Lord?

- 1.) We should love God and try to please Him because He first loved us, 2 Corinthians 5.14; 1 John 4.19.
- 2.) We must keep ourselves from sin or the Father will chasten us, as we learned in Chapter 10.
- 3.) We will receive a great reward for serving the Lord.
 - a. We read about the Judgment Seat of God in Romans 14.10-12.
 - i) Every person will stand before God and give account of what he or she has done while living here on earth, Isaiah 45.23.
 - ii) We will not be judged for our sins, because we belong to the Lord, Romans 14.8.
 - iii) Some teachers speak of the Award Throne rather than the Judgment Seat, and we will soon read more about the rewards. But this same word is used for the Judgment Seat of Pilate, Matthew 27.19; John 19.13; Herod, Acts 12.21; Gallio, Acts 18.12; Festus, Acts 25.4,6,17; Caesar, Acts 25.10.
 - b. The Church is God's dwelling, which Christ is building, Matthew 16.18, on the foundation laid by the apostles, Ephesians 2.20. Every believer is doing something in this work, by building with gold, silver and precious stones; or with wood, grass or straw, 1 Corinthians 3.11-15. The day of the Lord will reveal what each of us has been doing for the Lord since we were saved. The prophets spoke about fire in the

day of the Lord, Joel 1.15,19,20; 2.1,3,5; 30,31; Obadiah vs.15,18; Zephaniah 1.18. In 1 Corinthians 3 the fire does not come on the believers, but on their works, v.15. Some will see all their works disappear in the fire. Others will receive a reward which will be theirs forever.

What am I doing today to help true believers? My reward will last forever.

b. The Spirit of God spoke again about the Judgment Seat of Christ in 2 Corinthians 5.9-11. While we live our only ambition should be to please the Lord, vs.9,15. For we must all appear before Christ's Judgment Seat and all will be revealed. We shall then receive according to what we have done while in this world. We should try to persuade people to come to God through Christ.

I would like very much to earn a reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ, wouldn't you? The question is, How to do it? What is the basis for rewards? Why will the Lord give rewards to some and not to others?

Rewards are not for missionaries only or for those who give their whole lives to the service of the Lord. Some go out to the battle while others stay at home and support them and pray for them. There will be rewards for both. For example, Israel sent the soldiers out to war against their enemies, and they brought back great treasure, the "reward" of victory, Numbers 31.3,11. The Lord told the soldiers to divide these things equally with those who did not go, vs.25-27. David said the same, 1 Samuel 30.24.

Rewards may not depend on how long we serve, because some believers are saved when they are older. Consider the parable in Matthew 20.1-16. Some started to work late in the day, but it was not their fault and they received the same pay as others.

Some believers seem to have great gifts – they can speak to large groups, and many claim to be saved. But each one of us must serve the Lord according to the gift and opportunities which He gives. The reward depends on both the quality and the quantity of our service.

1.) quality In 1 Corinthians 3 we see that the Lord will consider how we build, v.10; and what sort it is, v.13.

2.) quantity In Luke 19.11-19 each servant received the same gift, one piece of money. The first one gained ten, and his reward

was greater than the one who gained only five.

In 2 Corinthians 5.10 we must all appear before Christ and our hearts will be revealed. The Lord calls some of His servants good or good and faithful, Matthew 25.21,23; Luke 19.17. The Lord considers mostly the heart's desire. What is my true reason for serving Him? There will be no reward if I want to make money or get glory for myself. We must do all for His glory.

So we see that all believers do not get the same reward, but everyone will receive praise for what he has done for Christ, 1 Corinthians 4.5. The Lord of course knows all the thoughts of our hearts.

Crowns

Next we may ask, What will these rewards be like? The Bible speaks of crowns. Let us look at seven verses.

1. The crown of life, James 1.12. This is the promise for those who face trials and temptations and succeed through them all by gaining victory. Only those with eternal life can do this. We have seen that eternal life is the gift of God, chapter 2. What then is the reward called the crown of life?

The Lord Jesus Christ came so that all believers will have life, but some enjoy this eternal life more than others, John 10.10. This may be because they love the Giver more. To enter Heaven one must have eternal life, but some will be happier than others because they did not give in to temptation.

Some of God's people have to go through terrible times when the enemy persecutes them and kills many of them. Some may give up but the Lord promised a crown of life to those who remain faithful even to death, Revelation 2.10. They will share in the joy of Him who gave His life for them.

2. In some ways the Christian life is like a battle against our enemies. It is also like a running a race, 1 Corinthians 9.24-27. Many run but only one gets the prize and he must try very hard in order to win. He keeps his body under self-control, with the help of the Spirit, Galatians 5.23, and he runs the race knowing just where he wants to go. Schools often have races and the winners get honor for a short time.

Christ will give some a crown which will last forever. We should be willing to work hard for such a prize, Philippians 3.14

3. In a race each one tries to get ahead of everyone else, but in the Christian life, you can win a prize by helping others. Paul went to two cities in Macedonia and many people were saved. This made Paul happy, like the Good Shepherd who finds the lost sheep, Luke 15.6. Paul called these believers his joy and crown, 1 Thessalonians 2.19; Philippians 4.1.

What a joy it will be to meet some in heaven whom
we have helped in this world!

4. The elders of any assembly are like shepherds looking after the sheep of God's flock. They should do this, not for money, but to please the Lord, the Chief Shepherd, 1 Peter 5.1-4. They should feed the sheep by teaching them the pure Word of God, John 21.16; Acts 20.28. They will receive a crown of glory if they are good examples to all the believers. But we should all care for one another, 1 Corinthians 12.25; Ephesians 4.16. The Lord will never forget anything which is done for Him, Hebrews 6.10.

5. We can earn another crown, the crown of righteousness, which the Lord promises to all those who love His appearing, 2 Timothy 4.8. This depends on whether we love Him. His coming will mean glory for us, but more important, it will mean glory for Him. We received righteousness when we believed in Christ, Romans 5.17; see Chapter 5. But we should surely live righteous lives, Philippians 1.11; 1 Thessalonians 2.10; Titus 2.12. The hope of the Lord's return helps us to live the Christian life, 1 John 3.2,3, and earn this crown of righteousness.

But in Heaven Christ will get all the honor, so we will have the privilege of throwing our crowns at His feet, like the 24 elders in Revelation 4.10.

I hope I will have one to give Him!

Kind words of approval

There are other verses which describe our rewards:

1.) Daniel 12.3, Wise teachers will shine like the sky. Soul winners and evangelists will shine like the stars, forever. The Lord Jesus taught that believers, righteous people, will shine like the sun, Matthew 13.43, but again we see that there are special promises for those who serve Him by serving others.

2.) The Lord Jesus told His disciples that He would praise them openly

for good service which they could give. He told them two parables, the first, Luke 19.11-27, to many of His followers at Jericho; the second about five days later, to four of His apostles, Matthew 25.14.30. In the first, a great man called his ten servants and gave each of them a piece of money. One of them gained ten times as much, and the master said to him,

Well done, good servant.

In the second parable also, the master gave one servant five talents of gold, and he gained five more. The master said to him,

Well done, good and faithful servant.

Another received only two talents, but he gained two more, and the master said the same words to him.

The Lord Jesus will say something like this to some of His servants at the Judgment Seat of Christ, but only, of course, to those who are good and faithful and have served Him well in this life.

The Lord gives some gift to every child of His and we should use this gift in serving Him, for His glory.

More than that, in both parables, the Lord gives authority and responsibility to those who serve Him well here, Matthew 25.21,23; Luke 19.17,19. So these two things are the reward for faithful servants: the Lord gives a word of praise, and the privilege of serving Him still more.

In Matthew 25.21,23 He also told the good servants to enter into the joy of the Lord. This does not mean to enter Heaven, because no one gets into Heaven because of his good works. The "joy of the Lord" is the Lord's own pleasure when the lost are found, Luke 15.5,6,9,24,32. We can help find them and share in His joy even now.

In Matthew 25.26,30, one "servant" is thrown out into the dark, where there is sorrow and anger. He was lazy, wicked, and useless. He was not a true servant or son of God at all.

Two men	One man
Heard the Lord praise them	Heard the Lord condemn him
Good and faithful servant	Wicked, lazy, useless
Ruler over many things	Outer darkness
Kept their talents	Lost his talent
Enter joy	Sorrow and anger forever

Today there are many people who claim to be servants of Christ, but they are false teachers, 2 Peter 2.1.

So some will have great joy at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Will any have sorrow? What about true believers who never serve the Lord? They will surely be sorry that they wasted their lives. They will see all their work disappear like wood, grass and straw burned in the fire, 1 Corinthians 3.15. Some will give account with grief, Hebrews 13.17. Others will be ashamed, 1 John 2.28. In games and races a person will not win a prize unless he keeps the rules, 2 Timothy 2.5. Those who share in Christ's suffering will have great joy, but not those who love this world. God will not forget to reward those who labor for Him in love, Hebrews 6.10, but those who live a lazy and easy life will never know this joy. Some will then see that they might have had a crown, but they listened to some man or woman and so lost their crown, Revelation 3.11.

Some believers will be ashamed when Christ comes. Worse still the Lord will be ashamed:

- of those who are ashamed of Him, Luke 9.26;
- of those who do not serve Him, Proverbs 10.5.

Judgments

You see that the Judgment Seat of Christ is very serious. The Bible speaks of other Judgments but we do not need to be afraid of them:

1. The Judgment of the Sheep and the Goats, Matthew 25.31-46.

This will be at the end of the Tribulation when the Lord comes in power and glory. During the Tribulation Satan will persecute the Jews and all who come to believe in Christ, Revelation 13.7. The Lord Jesus calls them His "brethren," Matthew 25.40. Some people will help these believers, and the Lord calls them "sheep." Other men are the "goats." The sheep really have faith and they show it by their actions, so they will enter the kingdom of God, John 3.3.

The Lord will come before this time to take His Church to heaven to be with Himself as His Bride forever. The Church will not appear at the Judgment of the Sheep and Goats.

2. The Great White Throne, Revelation 20.11-15

This will be a thousand years later, Revelation 20.5. The Son of God

will be on the throne. God's books will be opened showing what every person has done. Only sinners will appear there, because righteous people rose from death at His first coming. That time will be called "the second resurrection," and the sinners will have to go to the Lake of Fire, the second death, vs. 14, 15.

We believers can rejoice in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are sinners as bad as any but the Lord has saved us. He did not want any of our good works, He did all the work. But now as His children we do all the good we can, and by His grace, He will give us eternal rewards for all we do!

Stop right here and thank the Lord for His grace to you.

ETERNAL SECURITY - TEST 7

REWARDS Chapter 12

Enter the correct answer.

- .
1. At the Judgment Seat of Christ
- a) All believers will stand;
 - b) All will be judged for their sins;
 - c) All will receive equal rewards.

- .
2. We should work for the Lord
- a) so He will save us;
 - b) so He will not throw us out;
 - c) so He can give us a reward.

- .
3. The crown of life is for those who
- a) love the Lord's return;
 - b) overcome temptation;
 - c) feed God's sheep.

- .
4. Every knee shall bow but only unbelievers will be
- a) at the Judgment Seat of Christ;
 - b) at the Judgment of the Sheep and Goats;
 - c) at the Great White Throne.

- .
5. I can earn a reward by
- a) saving money and becoming famous;
 - b) serving for fifty years or more;
 - c) helping other believers.

.

Enter TRUE or FALSE

- .
6. Some called "servants" will be thrown out.
7. Some will have sorrow and shame at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
8. We should work for a crown which we can wear forever in heaven.
9. Paul called believers his crown.
10. You could lose your crown but still have your eternal life.

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WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Are you seeking to serve God? What are your reasons for serving Him?

Thirteen

Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior



It is important to understand what the Bible teaches about faith and works, and to keep the right balance between the two.

1. We are saved by faith alone.
2. Then we should do all good works.

You are saved by faith in the LORD Jesus Christ, Acts 16.31. No one can accept Christ as Savior and not as Lord. There is only one Jesus Christ: He is both Lord and Savior, Titus 1.4; 2.13; 3.6; 2 Peter 3.18.

Again, God gave His Son so that whoever believes in the Son of God shall be saved, John 3.18,36; 9.35; 11.27; 20.31. The Son is both God and our Savior, 1 Timothy 1.1; 2.3.; 4.10; Titus 1.3; 2.10; 3.4.

Some people think that they can accept Christ as their Savior – and then do as they please. This is simply not true, Acts 26.20; Chapter 10.

We must confess Jesus as Lord and believe in our hearts, Romans 10.9.

Like the disciples, we call on the Lord to save us, Matthew 8.25; 14.30.

His word is sure: Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved, Romans 10.13.

We believe in the Lord, Acts 9.42; 11.17; 13.12,48; 14.23; 18.8. We have faith in the Lord, Acts 20.21; Romans 5.1; Ephesians 1.15; Philemon v.5; James 2.1.

THIRTEEN: Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior 43

As Lord, the Savior must have control of our lives. So we have two important truths:

We are justified by faith, Romans 4.5; 5.1; 11.6; not dead works, Hebrews 6.1; 9.14; see Chapter 5;

We are justified by works, James 2.14,17,18,21,22,24-26.

James 2.14 True faith always results in good works. For example, the jailor believed the gospel, and at once began to help the Lord's servants, Acts 16.30-34. So did Lydia, vs.14,15.

2.17 Living faith is faith which brings eternal life. This faith will produce good works. Today, many people say that they believe in Christ, but they show no evidence in their lives, Titus 1.16. We do not accept them as Christians, but give them the gospel so they will be truly saved.

2.18 We show our faith by our works.

2.19 Others say they believe in God, but this is not the same as having faith which will save us from sin and change our lives.

2.20-23 It is foolish to think that faith without works will save you. For example, Abraham believed God, and proved his faith by offering up Isaac as God commanded.

2.23-26 Rahab also believed that God was with Israel and showed her faith by helping His servants, Joshua 2.1-21, Hebrews 11.31.

Good works are necessary, not to earn eternal life, Titus 3.8,14, but to prove that we have received eternal life as a gift of God. Even so, it is God who works in us to produce the good works.

Ephesians 2.8-10 We are saved through faith, which is the gift of God; not saved through works, but saved to do good works which God has planned for us.

The first "work" is to believe, John 6.29. Then the Bible tells us many things which God will do in and for us. See 1 Corinthians 12.6,11; 2 Corinthians 9.8; Ephesians 3.20; Philippians 1.6; 2.13; Colossians 1.29; 2 Thessalonians 1.11; 2.17; Hebrews 13.21.

Jesus Christ is not only Savior and Lord, He is also our Shepherd, as we learned in Chapter 7. We must hear His voice and follow Him.

How wonderful to know that salvation is free. But remember, rewards must be earned!

ETERNAL SECURITY - TEST 8

JESUS CHRIST Lord and Saviour Chapter 13

Enter the correct answer.

1. Which verse proves we are saved by faith?
 - a) James 2.25;
 - b) Ephesians 2.8;
 - c) 1 Corinthians 12.6

2. Which verse proves that our Saviour is God and so must be obeyed?
 - a) Titus 3.4;
 - b) James 2.26;
 - c) Ephesians 2.9.

3. We are justified before men by
 - a) telling them we believe;
 - b) good works;
 - c) having our name on the church roll.

4. Rahab showed her faith by
 - a) betraying the spies;
 - b) helping God's servants;
 - c) obeying the government.

5. Abraham was justified by works, as we see in
 - a) James 2.21;
 - b) Romans 4.3;
 - c) Galatians 3.6.

Enter TRUE or FALSE

6. You can accept Christ as Saviour and still do just as you please.
7. Faith, living or dead, can bring me eternal life.
8. Works done before you believe are dead works.
9. Faith in God's family would save us.
10. God saves us without our works, and then promises us rewards if we serve Him.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

How can we be justified by faith and by works?

Fourteen

Hard Verses about Salvation



The Bible is a wonderful Book and we have seen God's grace in saving us, keeping us, and giving us rewards for faithful service. But there is more! He will not let us go on in sin, so He chastens us to bring us back to Himself, Chapter 10. Some verses are very clear but others seem to bring up problems for many people. A good rule is:

Never let a hard verse spoil your joy in the clear teaching of Scripture.

We will look at these hard verses but first we will think about Satan's efforts to spoil God's work. He brings in false teachers so that the Church includes many who say they are Christians but they are not real. They may think they are saved. How can we tell? How can we know who are the false teachers?

Wolves

The Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples to be careful because false prophets like to wear clothing that makes them look like sheep, but they are really wild wolves who want to kill and eat the sheep, Matthew 7.15. By the Spirit Paul warned the elders of the assembly at Ephesus that wolves would come in from outside, and others already in the church would teach what is false in their desire to get people to follow them, Acts 20.29,30. You can tell who these false prophets are by what they do, Matthew 7.16-20, as well as by their wrong teaching.

Satan himself can appear to men as an angel of light. We should not be surprised if his servants can make themselves look like righteous men,

2 Corinthians 11.14,15. Satan was called “Son of the morning,” Isaiah 14.12, and an angel from heaven may preach something that sounds like the gospel, which is not the true word of God, Galatians 1.8. There were false prophets in Israel, for example, Hananiah, Jeremiah 28.15-17; and false teachers in the church, 2 Peter 2.1. The servants of Satan creep in to the church, Jude v.4, for example, Hymenaeus and Philetus, 2 Timothy 2.17.

There are many people in the churches who are not true Christians. Satan “sows” his own seeds in the field and the weeds grow up and look much like the true grain, Matthew 13.24-30,36-43. In the end the angels will throw them all into the Lake of Fire.

Many claim to follow the Lord and they even join the church. Others have good character, like the young women in Matthew 25.1-12. These all had lamps, which speak of the Holy Spirit, Revelation 4.5. Here He is giving light to the young women and to others around. The oil also is a picture of the Holy Spirit, because oil was used to anoint a priest or a king, Exodus 29.7; 1 Samuel 10.1; 16.13, and Christ was anointed by the Holy Spirit, Acts 10.38. Five of the young women were foolish. They thought they had some of the blessings of the Spirit and tried to act like the wise believers, but when the Lord comes they learn that it is not so. The Lord said He did not know them, and He would not let them in.

Some can do miracles which they say are in His Name (really in the power of Satan), Matthew 7.21-23. Of course the Lord Jesus knows all who are truly His, 2 Timothy 2.19, but He will have to tell these people, I never knew you. (Notice He will not say, “I once knew you but you stopped following me;” no, He says He never knew them as His own).

The Son of God here on earth knew all things, John 13.1,3; 16.30; 21.17. He knew the heart of men, and He knew who really were trusting in Him. Some saw His miracles and “believed” in His Name, but the Lord did not commit Himself to them, John 2.23,24. Some were called disciples but they could not understand all His teaching so they went back, John 6.60,66.

Today it is the same. There are millions of people who belong to some church, but they are not really born again from above. Some are trusting in their own good works, others think they are safe just because they joined a church and got baptized.

We can recognize false teachers by their doctrine. We should not receive

or welcome them in our homes or church. There are many deceivers in the world who are opposed to our Lord Jesus Christ. They do not teach that Christ is the Son of God. When we greet them we are asking God to bless them and this means sharing in their wicked acts, 2 John vs.7-11.

The same is true of wicked spirits and false prophets. There are many of them in the world. They are opposed to Christ and do not teach that He came from heaven as God in the form of Man, 1 John 4.1-3.

These false teachers and false prophets try to persuade people to follow them, and they try to get into Christian churches. We have seen that no true believer can lose the gift of eternal life; if he goes on in sin, the Father knows how to teach him. Sometimes it would seem that a person is a true believer, then he goes back into sin or into some false teaching. We must remember that he or she may not be a real, born-again Christian at all.

Hard Verses

But some will say that there are a few verses in the Bible which seem to teach that a believer can lose his eternal life. Let us look at these, with the Spirit's help, remembering that He inspired the whole Bible, all 66 books, 2 Timothy 3.16; 2 Peter 1.21, so all must be true, John 14.17; 15.26; 16.13. The proper meaning of any verse will not contradict another verse. We must try to understand the true meaning of these hard verses, considering the verses just before and just after each one, and in the light of the whole Scripture.

Some of these verses are in the Old Testament and we should remember that the Old Testament is the covenant of law. The grace of God was fully revealed when Christ came, John 1.14,17.

Korah and three others talked to 250 men in Israel, and tried to take Moses' and Aaron's place as the leaders of the people, Numbers 16.1-3. God showed that they were rebelling against Him and they died when the earth opened up under them, Numbers 16.29-32. These men were all Israelites, but they may never have had faith in the Lord. The Bible does not say that they were true believers, or that they went to the Lake of Fire. God punished them at once for their sins, in order to show that He had chosen Moses and Aaron as the leaders. You see that Numbers 16 does not at all prove that a true believer can be lost forever.

Later even Aaron and Moses fell into sin, Numbers 20.10-12,24;

27.12-14. God punished them, not by taking away His gift of eternal life, but by denying them the privilege of entering the Promised Land.

The LORD commanded Joshua that the people should not take for themselves anything valuable when the army captured Jericho, Joshua 6.17-19. Achan saw a beautiful robe, some silver and gold, and he took these things for himself. The LORD punished him by death, Joshua 7.21-25. Again we see here a man of Israel who died for his sin. It does not say that he was a true believer, or that he was punished after his death. God does punish true believers who go on in their sin, but He does not take back His gift of eternal life.

Saul disobeyed the LORD and God punished him by taking away his kingdom, 1 Samuel 15.22,23. Solomon also turned away from worshiping the true God, and so the LORD took away his kingdom, 1 Kings 11.4,11-13. Even so Solomon could continue to reign until his death, and then his son would have one tribe. Again we see that the holy God must punish sin, even when His chosen king does wrong. This is not the same as taking away his eternal life. We have seen that God punished David very severely, Chapter 10.

Even the nation of Israel must face God's anger when they turn away from Him. Jeremiah called their sin backsliding, Jeremiah 8.5,6. They held on to their lies and they refused to return or repent. The LORD punished them by allowing the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem, to kill many of the people and take the rest away as prisoners. Today the Lord says that He has no pleasure in those who turn back, Hebrews 10.38. He will have to teach them their lessons if they are truly His sons or daughters.

God told His faithful servant Ezekiel that he must warn wicked people, and he would be responsible if he did not do so, Ezekiel 3.17-20. Ezekiel warned the people many times. God said He would judge the wicked people if they did not repent, He would punish them forever in the Lake of Fire. Ezekiel would lose his reward if he failed to warn them, but not his eternal life.

There may be other verses in the Old Testament which some people think teach that a true believer may be lost forever. But we can understand them all as these examples.

It does not say that they had eternal life, or that they lost it.

It does say that God will punish His true children if they disobey Him. This will be here in this life, not in the next.

ETERNAL SECURITY - TEST 9

HARD VERSES Chapter 14

Enter the correct answer.

1. We know who are false teachers because
 - a) they look like sheep not wolves;
 - b) of what they teach and how they act;
 - c) they appear as angels of light.

2. The Lord will say to some
 - a) I once knew you but you stopped following me;
 - b) I never knew you;
 - c) I do not know if you are mine or not.

3. God the Holy Spirit inspired
 - a) all 66 books of the Bible and no more;
 - b) the whole Bible and the writings of the early church fathers;
 - c) only those verses which we wish to believe.

4. Both Aaron and Moses served the Lord for many years but fell into sin, so
 - a) they lost their eternal life;
 - b) this proves that we do not have eternal security ;
 - c) God punished them.

5. The Old Testament tells us that Korah, Achan and Saul
 - a) had eternal life but lost it;
 - b) went to hell when they died;
 - c) were punished for their sins.

Enter TRUE or FALSE

6. There are hard verses in the Bible and false teachers in the churches.
7. Some false teachers have good character, teach some truth, and can do miracles.
8. If they sin, God will punish His true children in this life and the next.
9. The LORD warned Ezekiel that he was responsible and might lose his eternal life.
10. Hymenaeus and Philetus taught that there is no resurrection.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

What is the good rule with regard to hard verses?

Fifteen

Hard Verses in the New Testament

—False professors—



Let us now look at some Hard Verses in the New Testament. Some teachers use these verses trying to prove that a true believer may lose his eternal life. Many people accept this teaching and when they do they lose their peace and joy. Worse still, many think that they must do more good works to keep themselves in God's family. But salvation is not by works, neither past salvation nor present salvation, Chapter 11. So these people are doing their good works for selfish reasons, to keep themselves saved. We have seen that any service done for the Lord will earn a reward, Chapter 12. So these false teachers rob a believer of his joy and his reward.

We are saved from the power of sin every day by faith and by grace, Chapter 11. Paul asked the Galatian Christians if they received the Holy Spirit by works or by faith, Galatians 3.2. They started in the Christian life by the Spirit, but they thought they could become good Christians by their own works, Galatians 3.3. We can say with Paul that the life we live in these bodies is by faith in the Son of God, Galatians 2.20.

Let us look at some of these verses. Many people have a problem when they see someone who seems to believe but then turns back to the

world and his old life. We cannot decide whether this person is true or not – he might be a real believer, or a false professor. (We use the word “professor” here, not meaning a teacher in a college, but anyone who “says” he is Christian.)

We will look at these Hard Verses:

- 1.) False professors Chapter 15
- 2.) True believers Chapter 16
- 3.) Other verses Chapter 17

The question is: Do these verses speak of true believers who lose their eternal life, or false professors who never really received it?

- 1.) Verses which have reference to False Professors

Luke 8.5 Here the Lord Jesus told a parable about the Good Seed, which is the Word of God, Luke 8.11. It fell on different kinds of ground but sometimes it did not produce good grain. Satan took away some of the seed, v.12, so this does not speak of anyone professing to be saved.

In the next case, people heard the Word and “believed” but they had no root and could not stand when they were tempted. They did not have life from God, they soon fell back. In the third case, people heard, but the troubles or the pleasures of this world kept them from producing any real fruit. If they really have life, only the Lord could know it. Only in the last case is their abundant fruit for God’s glory.

This parable teaches that the Good News should result in much fruit. Some seem to believe, but the things of the world keep them from living the Christian life. The seed on thorny ground may speak of false believers who go back to the world, or true believers who do not grow properly because of worldly interests and cares. In either case this parable does not teach that someone can receive eternal life then lose it again.

Another parable in Matthew 22.2-14 teaches that the kingdom of heaven is like a great feast. The king sent His servants to invite people to come as His guests. This is like the Gospel message, and some refuse. One man got in without the proper clothing but he was thrown out. Clothing is a picture of righteousness, and this man came in his own clothing, which was like dirty old clothes, Isaiah 64.6. He was thrown into the place of darkness, sorrow and anger, that is, Hell.

Was this man a true believer? We must understand that the kingdom of heaven is not the same as Heaven; today it is the church in the world, where all say that they are ready to obey God as King. The kingdom of heaven includes many false believers, who profess they have really believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another verse is in Matthew 25.30. The Lord gave a gift to this man, but he did not love the Lord. He called the Lord hard and unfair, because he said that the Lord tried to get a harvest where some one else had sowed. Many unsaved persons have great gifts, which they never use for the glory of God. This person was “wicked and lazy,” and he too was thrown out into darkness, sorrow and hatred. He had a gift, he was called a servant, but he never had eternal life.

Before this the Lord Jesus knew that many followed Him for a short time but did not go on. They could not understand everything so they turned away from Him, John 6.60,64,66. The Bible does not say that they were lost forever, but that they followed the Lord because they wanted to get free food, John 6.26.

The Lord Jesus knew that Judas Iscariot would betray Him, Luke 6.16; John 6.71. Judas received the same teaching as the eleven apostles, and had the same privileges. He never really accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior. He wanted money and stole it, John 12.6. He allowed Satan to enter into his heart, Luke 22.3; John 13.2.

In John 17.12, the Father “gave” the other apostles to His Son, and the Lord “kept” them all. He accepted Judas as one of them, because the Scripture said that one of His friends would become His enemy and try to hurt Him, Psalm 41.9; John 13.18. Judas was “the son of perdition,” like the man of sin, 2 Thessalonians 2.3: This means that he chose not to follow or obey the Lord, the Savior, the Life-Giver, and so he put himself under God’s judgment. No one would suppose that Judas was a true believer; he was a false professor.

Another man like this is Simon in Acts 8.9-24. He used magic and pretended to be a great man. But many people heard Philip preach the Good News, and so Simon said he too believed, and he was baptized. Then he tried to buy with money the Holy Spirit’s gift so he could continue to be a “great man.” Peter said that his heart was not right with

God and he was still in the bonds of sin. Simon asked Peter to pray for him, and perhaps he repented, but these verses in Acts 8 do not say that he really had eternal life, or that he lost it again.

The Lord Jesus taught that a person could be delivered from a demon or spirit in him, but still not be saved, Luke 11.24-26. This man may clean up the sin of his own life and look like a true believer. He does not receive Christ and so the Holy Spirit is not dwelling in him. The wicked spirit returns with others and this man has no strength to resist them and his condition is worse than before.

We have seen that many say they believe and they follow the Lord for a while, like those spoken of in Luke 8.13. Some of these listen to wicked spirits and false teachers, 1 Timothy 4.1. This proves that they were never born again from above. There are thousands of these false teachers today and we can be sure that we are in the “last times.”

There are also hard verses in Hebrews, for example, 3.12-14; 6.4-6; 10.26-29.

Hebrews 3.12-14 This says that there might be among the Hebrew believers someone who does not believe, who becomes hard because sin has deceived him, and departs from God. We understand that there were many Hebrew people who turned from the Jewish religion and joined with the Christians, as in Acts 4.4; 6.7; 9.31. Their families and the priests were always trying to get them back to the temple and the synagogue. If they did go back, it would be departing from God. The true believers would hold fast their confidence in Christ to the end, but they could not be sure if any other individual was a true Christian. They should continue to teach and help one another to stand firm. The Spirit warns us all to hold fast, Hebrews 3.6,14.

Some of those called Christians may seem to come short of entering fully into God's rest, 4.1. Those who truly believe will enter. Others hear the gospel but do not listen with true faith, 4.2,6. They are like the people of Israel who rebelled against God, 3.7-11.

True believers also may not enter fully into the blessings of God's salvation. Love for the world or love for myself may keep me from possessing all that Christ has for me. I should fully believe His Word, and “rest”

on it. Then I can serve Him just because I love Him, not to keep myself saved, as some teach.

6.4-6 These verses describe those who really appear to be true Christians. They see the light (but do not follow fully); they taste the gifts, (but do not eat and drink); they share in the blessings of the Spirit (they are delivered from bad habits, and seem to have peace); they taste the Word of God and say it is good; and have seen miracles. But they trespass and fall away, that is, they go back to the old religion of the Jews. The Spirit tells us that it is impossible to bring these people to God again. They are now back on the side of those who crucified the Lord Jesus, and say as much as this, that the Jews did right in demanding that Pilate should kill Him.

Notice it is not said that they had faith, or truly believed, or had eternal life. Still some teachers think that these verses describe born again believers, but even so it does not prove that they were lost again. It is possible for a believer to go into sin, and never repent until his Father takes him home to Heaven by way of death. See 1 Corinthians 11.30 and 1 John 5.16. See Chapters 10 and 16.

10.26-29 Here the Spirit says that any person might come to know the truth and profess to be a Christian. Some one might decide that the old religion is better, and commit sin by going back to the life he left earlier. He gives up Christ, who is the only Sacrifice for sin, so now he can look forward to nothing but to God's judgment. He is with those who oppose God and so he must be punished with them in the Lake of fire.

This person has learned that Jesus is the Son of God, but now tramples Him underfoot as pigs do because they cannot see any beauty in pearls, Matthew 7.6. For a while he went along with those who were under the covenant made by the blood of Christ, and people thought that he was set apart for God. Now he considers that precious blood to be something common and cheap. With the Christians he received some of the blessings of the Holy Spirit, 2.4; 6.4, called here the Spirit of grace, like the God of all grace, 1 Peter 5.10. Now this person proudly insults the Spirit of God as if he were stronger than the Lord!

This man or woman will be punished in the Lake of Fire forever. We are not told that such a person was once truly saved or born again, and

we can be sure that he was not.

You may know some people like this but if they will listen at all, you can only warn them and try to draw them back to Christ.

In Hebrews we have much teaching about the complete Sacrifice for sin, our Lord Jesus Christ, and God will not remember our sins any more, 10.17. But there is no other sacrifice. If people turn from Christ, they are lost, in fact, they never were saved.

In 10.38 we see the wonderful words that righteous people live by faith, Habakkuk 2.4; Romans 1.17; Galatians 3.11. God declares sinners to be righteous by faith, Romans 3.28. They receive eternal life by faith, John 3.15; 1 Timothy 1.16. Some may seem to start off as born again from above, but they soon show that they reject Christ as the only Savior and go back to the religion of good works.

Of course, God is not pleased when people reject His Son. He has never given eternal life to those whom He knew were not real, so He does not take it away again. God was not pleased with many in Israel, 1 Corinthians 10.5; nor with sacrifices offered without faith, Hebrews 10.6,8.

What does please God? He is entirely pleased with His Son, Matthew 3.17; 12.18; 17.5; 2 Peter 1.17. He is pleased to save those who believe, 1 Corinthians 1.21. Soon He will be pleased to give us the kingdom, Luke 12.32.

What can we do to please the Lord? We can live according to His Word and keep His commands, 1 Thessalonians 4.1; 1 John 3.22. To worship in spirit and truth will please the Father for He is seeking believers to do that, John 4.23

In Hebrews 12.15 also we read that some may “fall short” of the grace of God. We should seek for holiness, v.14, which God alone can give us, in Christ, 1 Corinthians 1.30; 6.11. We have read of some who fall short of God’s rest, Hebrews 4.1. We should also watch out for one another, because someone in the church may seem to be a believer, yet never really enter into the truth that we are saved by grace alone. The Spirit gives us the example of Esau, Hebrews 12.16,17, who was brought up in the same way as Jacob, but was interested only in material things,

like food, Genesis 25.29-34.

Again, look at 2 Peter 2.20. Some people can change their way of life when they join up with Christians, and seem to escape from the filthy habits of the world. They are not really trusting in Christ and after a while go back again to their sins. Their condition now is worse than before, and the Spirit says they are like a dog or a pig, v.22.

Some teachers try to explain 1 Corinthians 3.17 by saying that a believer may defile God's temple and be destroyed. In verse 15 we saw that a believer will lose his reward, Chapter 12, if he lives his life for selfish reasons, but he is still saved. False teachers try to get into the church and bring in false believers. This harms the true church and God will surely punish such false teachers.

Galatians 5.4 speaks of those who do not accept the truth of salvation by grace but demand that people keep the law. There are two roads, two ways, two systems: works and grace. Man's way is to try and work his way to Heaven; God says this is impossible, Romans 3.20; 11.6. God's way is only by grace, by the blood, and by faith. Even God's law is not sufficient because no man except Christ has ever been able to keep it perfectly.

There is a great difference between law and grace, John 1.17; Romans 6.14. Jewish teachers came to the churches of Galatia and taught them that they must keep the law of Moses if they want to be saved. Some people listened to this and decided that it must be true. They left the great truth of free salvation by Christ and went down to the human teaching that you must work to be saved.

So we have looked at many hard verses, but we see that not one of them says a true believer may lose his eternal life. Let us look at other hard verses which tell us what will happen to a true believer.

ETERNAL SECURITY - TEST 10
HARD VERSES (NEW TESTAMENT) Chapter 15

Enter the correct answer.

1. The inspired book of Hebrews teaches us that
 - a) a true believer may lose his or her eternal life;
 - b) true believers are kept by the power of God;
 - c) God may leave or forsake some of His children.

2. At the great feast
 - a) many good and bad people were welcome;
 - b) one came in proper wedding clothes but was thrown out;
 - c) some made excuses and came late.

3. Judas
 - a) truly believed at first but then he was tempted;
 - b) followed the Lord without true faith;
 - c) learned and obeyed what the Lord taught.

4. In a church there are true believers
 - a) who go back to their old religion or to the world;
 - b) who prove they are real by going on with the Lord;
 - c) whom the Father chastens when they fall into sin; but they do not return.

5. To fall from grace (Galatians 5,4) is
 - a) going back to the Law for salvation;
 - b) losing eternal life when a believer sins;
 - c) failing to live up to God's high standards.

Enter TRUE or FALSE

6. You could lose your joy and your reward through wrong teaching.
7. Some people may get delivered from a demon without being saved.
8. A true believer may trample on the blood of Christ.
9. Law and grace came by Moses.
10. It is possible to bring again to repentance those who crucify Christ by their actions.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

What are 'false professors'?

Sixteen

More Hard Verses in the New Testament

—True Believers—



We have seen that many verses speak about false believers who decide to turn back to the world or to their old religion. There are other verses which speak of a true believer who falls into sin. You know what the Father will do to any and all of His children who do not obey Him, (see chapter 10). He chastens them here and now, but He does not take back the gift of eternal life. In Matthew 18.23-35 the Lord Jesus was teaching His disciples that they should forgive one another. If they do not forgive one another, the Father will punish them. One man owed his master a very large amount of money but he had no money to pay his debt. He asked for mercy and the master forgave the whole debt. Then this same man was very hard on another servant and demanded that he should fully pay a very small debt. This made his master very angry and he caused the first servant to suffer great pain. For God's children this great suffering may be sickness. The same word meaning to "suffer great pain" is used for people in Matthew 4.24 and 8.6 who were sick. The Father may allow His children to have a time of great trouble if they refuse to forgive others.

This same word is used of eternal pain in the lake of fire, Luke 16.23,28; Revelation 14.4; 20.10. It is far better to suffer here for a short time as God's children than to be separated from God forever.

John 15.6 says that a “branch” may be thrown out if it does not “bear fruit,” and it will be burned. Read verses 1-8. The Lord Jesus is speaking here to His disciples and He says they are like branches in a vine, and He is the Vine. Some branches produce fruit for the glory of God, others produce less fruit or no fruit. In verse 2 the Father is the great Vine-Dresser, and He helps the branches which remain in the Vine to bear fruit by making and keeping them clean.

The Father treats other branches differently; He takes them away. We have seen that God teaches His children not to sin against Him. He may take them out of this world if they continue to bring dishonor to His Name, 1 Corinthians 11.30. This word “takes away” may also mean the Father “lifts up” the branch, so that it will start bearing fruit, which He is always ready to do.

The branch must remain in the Vine in order to bear fruit. In verse 6 the person loses his opportunity to bear fruit. This may mean God takes him away, or that men refuse to let him continue to act like a Christian; they put him out of the church. God does take away our privilege of service if we refuse to use it, as the Lord warned the church of Ephesus, Revelation 2.5. The church also has the authority to put away anyone who continues in sin, 1 Corinthians 5.13.

What this man has produced is like the wood and hay of 1 Corinthians 3.12,15. We know that a true believer will never be lost again.

Some teachers say that the fruitless branch is a picture of the unbeliever who tries to act like a Christian. He is like some of the grain in Luke 8, (see Chapter 15). Either way, the Lord did not teach that a true believer might lose his eternal life.

The apostle Paul warned Timothy to hold on to faith and a good conscience, because some believers had put these things away, 1 Timothy 1.19,20. Two of these men were Hymenaeus and Alexander, who made a wreck of their faith. Paul was sailing in three ships at different times which were wrecked in terrible storms, 2 Corinthians 11.25. Here he used the same word as a picture of those who gave up a good conscience and began teaching things which were different from the faith, the truth which the New Testament teaches.

This is very serious and Paul as an apostle told the church to put

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these men out of the assembly. Satan would like to destroy all of us who believe in the Lord, but God protects us in the church. Earlier Paul by the Spirit told the Corinthians to put out a man guilty of moral sin, 1 Corinthians 5.4,5. Here it is a matter of doctrine. God's purpose is that these men might learn not to dishonor Him.

God will teach any of His children, sometimes by a lot of trouble, if they wander from Him, as we saw in Chapter 10. This is better than suffering forever as those who never accept the Lord.

Paul also told Timothy about some young women whose husbands have died; they forget their earlier promises and are ready to marry an unsaved man, 1 Timothy 5.11,12. They will receive condemnation, which means that God will judge them here in this life, but not by taking away the gift of eternal life which He gave them before. It is right that they should get married, v.14, but only to a true believer, 1 Corinthians 7.39.

The Spirit also warns us about the desire to become rich, 1 Timothy 6.9,10. Some believers have all they need but still they want more. They are going to face temptation and fall into Satan's traps. They may wander from the faith and will receive many sorrows in this life. They thought money would make them happy, but it is just the opposite.

Some believers listen to false teachers who deceive them, 1 Timothy 4.1; 2 John v.7, and then they wander off from the truth they have learned, James 5.19,20. We should all pray for such persons and try to bring them back to the Lord. If they return, we can rejoice. If not, God may take them out of this world, 1 Corinthians 11.30; 1 John 5.16, as we saw in Chapter 15. We can help him to repent and so God will cover his sins and give him a longer life in this world. This would be showing love to these persons, 1 Peter 4.8.

John the Apostle wrote his first letter so we can know that we have eternal life, 1 John 5.13,19,20. We know that the Son of God gave His life for us and sent the Holy Spirit to remain in us, 3.24; 4.16. This gives us real peace, and two things help us to be sure: the Spirit gives us power to obey God's commands, and to love our brothers in Christ, 2.3-5; 3.14,18,19; 4.7,8; 5.2.

Even so, some teachers use verses from 1 John when they try to

prove that a person can be truly born again from above yet lose the gift of eternal life. Let us look at 1.6,8,9,10.

1 John 1.6 This verse teaches that some people claim to have fellowship with God, yet walk in darkness, not in the light of God's Word. Are these people really saved? No, they are lying. It is true that by faith we are delivered from darkness, 2 Corinthians 4.6; Colossians 1.13; 1 Peter 2.9, and we should surely walk in the light, Ephesians 5.8. No one should say that he has no sin, and we should confess our sins to the Father, vs.8,9.

8 Many sincere Christians think that they can go through some great experience and then they will be perfect and without sin. This verse teaches us that these people are just deceiving themselves because it is not true.

9 Every true believer should confess his sins to His Father as soon as possible. If he goes on in sin, the Father will have to chasten him, Chapter 10. If he confesses, the Father will not only forgive him, He will also make his heart clean again.

10 This is like verse 8, but it is worse, because calling God a liar is worse than deceiving ourselves. "God said it, I believe it, that settles it for me."

None of these verses really says that a true child of God can lose his eternal life which the Lord has given to him.

1 John 2.24 In the second chapter, John speaks to Christians, some young, some older. He calls younger believers "little children" and says their sins are forgiven and they know the Father, vs.12,13,21. He then warns the "little children" that there are many false teachers, vs.18,19,22,23, but the believers know the truth and have the Holy Spirit, vs.20,21. They should hold fast to the Scripture and keep themselves in the Father and in the Son.

We have seen that God will punish any believer who gives up the truth and starts believing false doctrine. Here the Spirit speaks especially about the doctrine that Christ is the Son of God. God punishes His children here in this world, but He does not throw them out of His family.

But in extreme cases, God the Father will indeed take His child out of this world rather than leave him here to keep on bringing dishonor to His Son. This is the meaning of 1 John 5.16: a sin that leads to death.

We should pray for every believer who falls into sin or goes on in sin. The Father may teach this person by allowing him to get very sick. God promises to hear our prayers, vs. 14, 15, when we ask according to His will. But his sin may be leading to death and God does not promise to answer in that case.

Of course even righteous people get sick, for example, Epaphroditus, Philippians 2.25-27, and death comes to everyone. It is not our duty to judge unless a person is openly going on in sin. Then we pray for him or her, and ask God to do what is right in His sight.

Again this verse may refer to those who profess to be true believers, brothers in the Lord, but they go back and give up the very name of Christ. God may not judge such people here and now, but their sin will surely lead to eternal death.

Demas is an example of a believer who served the Lord with Paul and Luke. Paul called him one of his "fellow workers," Colossians 4.14; Philemon v.24. These two letters were written while Paul was a prisoner in Rome, Acts 28.16. Paul was released but about four years later he was captured again and killed by the Romans. He wrote to Timothy before he died, and had to say that Demas had deserted him, 2 Timothy 4.10. The reason? Demas began to love this present world, which proves that he did not love the Father, 1 John 2.15. Demas gave up his opportunity to gain a reward, but he did not lose his eternal life. He went back to Thessalonica, where there was a church of Christians. Paul did not say that Demas had forsaken the Lord nor that he had gone back into sin. We believe Demas is in heaven, and we are sorry that he did not continue to serve the Lord.

This verse proves that a servant of God may (but never should) leave the work of the Lord. It does not say that such a person is lost again forever. There are many people like Demas today.

Now look at Hebrews 2.1-3. God surely punished the people of Israel when they sinned against Him. We should never think that we can sin against the Lord and that He will not punish us. Our great Savior has abundant power and is quite able to save us from every sin. Sometimes we get careless and fail to ask Him to help. Never suppose that He does not know. Our sin makes Him sad and He will chasten us, as we have seen in Chapter 10.

There are others who never accept Christ's salvation, and some who say they do but then turn back. They must face eternal punishment from God. They have refused the only Savior, there is no way they can escape.

2 Peter 1.10 is also a warning and a promise to the true children of God, those who have the same precious faith as Peter and the other apostles, v.1. We have great promises and we share in the life of God our Father, v.4. Still there are seven things that we should have and if we do, we will bear fruit for the glory of the Lord, vs.5-8.

But some believers do not grow as they should; they are blind and they forget what they were like before they were saved. We should live in such a way that we and others also may see clearly that we are called and chosen by God. This will keep us from falling and we will be confident that we are going to heaven, Christ's eternal kingdom.

There are other verses which speak of the death of a true believer. We have seen that the Father will not allow His child to go on bringing shame to the Lord Jesus by living in sin. He does not take away His Holy Spirit or the gift of eternal life. What does He do?

1. At once the sinning believer loses his joy in the Lord and his communion with Him. This alone should bring us back to Him.
2. If he does not repent, the Father will send some trouble into His life: he may get sick or lose his job. Perhaps his wife or children will get sick, or his house will burn down. God is speaking to him.
3. If he still refuses to repent, God may decide it is better that this son should be taken away from earth, where he insists on bringing dishonor to his Father.

Taking His son to Heaven is not punishment, because in Heaven the sinning son will have great joy. But he has lost his last great opportunity to serve the Lord who gave His life for him.

1 Corinthians 11.30 teaches us this truth. This verse speaks of those who eat and drink in an unworthy way. There were some in the church in Corinth who were greedy and got drunk, 11.21. They did not recognize or understand that the bread and the cup of the Lord's supper were holy pictures of His body and blood. They seemed to think that it was

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just an ordinary meal, and so they brought dishonor on the Lord, v.29. Some of these became sick and others died.

God spoke to them by allowing them to become sick, but some still refused to repent. Finally some of them “slept” which means they died. “Sleep” is a nice picture-word of death for a true believer. See Matthew 27.52; John 11.11; Acts 13.26; 1 Corinthians 15.6,30,31; 1 Thessalonians 4.14.

This is very solemn and we should be careful to confess any sin at once.

God may have other reasons to allow us to become sick. For example, Paul had some kind of trouble which he called a messenger of Satan, 2 Corinthians 12.7-9. The Lord allowed this so Paul would not become too proud. Paul prayed three times that the Lord would take it away, but God did not remove it.

We should pray that the Lord would heal any brother who is sick. The elders of the church should pray for the sick person and see that he or she has the proper medicine. The sick person should confess his sins, James 5.14-16. We should pray for anyone who wanders from the truth, even before he becomes sick, James 5.19,20. This prayer may cover many sins and the sick person may get better.

But the believer may keep on in his sin until he goes too far, beyond the limit. The Spirit calls this “a sin unto death,” 1 John 5.16. We should pray for anyone who is sick, but the Lord may not answer our prayer in this case. We cannot tell if any believer has gone this far in refusing to repent and stop sinning, only God knows. We should pray for this person, but the Lord does not promise to answer.

The early church often went through times of great trouble and false believers dropped out. Ananias and Sapphira were accepted as believers in the church in Jerusalem, but they were guilty of terrible sin – of lying to God, Acts 5.1-10. They made a plan: sell their property, give part of the money to the Lord’s work, and keep the rest for themselves. This would have been a good thing, but they said that they brought all the money to God. God judged them at once to teach the early church this great lesson.

We should not be like the sinners to be thrown into the Lake of Fire, Revelation 21.8, but we must always tell the truth, Colossians 3.9.

Another hard verse tells us not to “destroy” a brother by eating meat which had been offered to idols, Romans 14.15; 1 Corinthians 8.11. In the old heathen cities, the custom was to offer every animal to the false gods before it was killed for food. Some of the Christians said they would not eat this kind of meat, but others thought it was all right to do so. The Spirit of God said through Paul that it was wrong to eat this meat if it would lead another brother into sin. This other brother would see a believer doing what he thought was wrong. This might make him think that it does not matter what you do. He might go into other sins, and God the Father would have to chasten him. If he did not repent, he might lose his life in this world, and so the first person would feel very sorry.

We should be willing to give up things which are not wrong in themselves to help young Christians grow in the things of the Lord. Can we lose our rewards?

God’s power is quite great enough to keep us to the end, 1 Peter 1.5. We have learned that the true believer can never lose his eternal life. Some verses speak about rewards which can be lost, and these may seem to mean that he will lose his place in Heaven.

We should look forward to our rewards when the Lord comes. The Christian life is like a race on sports day. Many people run but only one receives the prize. The prize winner had to prepare by training his body, then run very hard to win the race.

Paul said it is far more important to win a prize in the Christian life, because our crowns will last forever, 1 Corinthians 9.24-27. Paul had great joy in serving the Lord even while he was still alive here on earth. He determined to sacrifice all pleasures in this world so he could preach the gospel to others. Paul knew that the Lord would take away the privilege of serving Him if he went on in sin. The Lord would “disqualify” him from the race. This does not mean that Paul’s eternal life would be lost, but he would lose his opportunity to serve and win a crown.

The Spirit warned the Corinthians about this in 2 Corinthians 13.5. Some might give up the truth which they had learned. They would lose their rewards. They would be like the false teachers who resist the truth, 2 Timothy 3.8. Some people in the church of Corinth were not truly saved at all. But true believers will be chastened by the Father who wants

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them to return to Himself.

In Revelation chapters 2 and 3, the Lord Jesus Christ is speaking to seven churches of the province of Asia. These seven letters have a message for us today. He warns us of evil trends in the churches, which we now can see all around us. In each of these letters the Lord gives a special promise to those who “overcome” and win the victory. Some teachers say that these promises are for some Christians, a special class, and therefore others will not be saved in the end. But these promises are for all true Christians:

	Overcomer Revelation	All believers
eat of the tree of life	2.7	Revelation 22.14
not hurt by second death	2.11	20.14
new name	2.17	Isaiah 56.5;65.15
rule over nations	2.26	Luke 19.17,19
also see		1 Corinthians 4.8; Revelation 5.10
clothed with white	3.5	Revelation 19.14
name of God	3.12	22.4
sit on throne with Christ	3.21	John 17.24; Revelation 19.4

All true believers are “overcomers,” sharing in the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ:

He gained the victory, John 16.33; Revelation 3.21;5.5;17.14. We are “overcomers” because we are in Christ, Romans 8.17,32,37; 1 Corinthians 15.57.

We will inherit all things, Revelation 21.7, Praise His Name! In His strength we should win victories every day, for His glory.

ETERNAL SECURITY - TEST 11
MORE HARD VERSES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT Chapter 16

Enter the correct answer.

1. I should forgive my fellow Christians. If I don't
 - a) God will cancel His forgiveness to me and I will lose the gift of eternal life;
 - b) God will punish me here on earth;
 - c) God will punish me through all eternity.

2. The Father is the Vine-Dresser and
 - a) He is pleased with the branches which bear much fruit;
 - b) He removes those branches which bear little fruit;
 - c) He cleans the branches which bear no fruit.

3. We should put out of the assembly those guilty of moral or doctrinal evil. This is so that
 - a) they will learn and return;
 - b) they will go to the lake of fire when they die;
 - c) others will follow their example.

4. If I sin, the Father
 - a) may take away my life on earth;
 - b) may take away my eternal life;
 - c) may just let it go and do nothing,

5. I should serve the Lord
 - a) to win the gift of eternal life;
 - b) so people will think that I am an important Christian;
 - c) to earn a reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Enter TRUE or FALSE

6. We can know here and now that we have eternal life for ever.
7. Some believers can reach sinless perfection while still living on earth.
8. God has promised to heal any sick person we pray for.
9. Paul feared that he might lose the privilege of serving the Lord.
10. A believer may commit a sin unto death, which means eternal death.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Are you a true believer? If so, how can you be sure?

Seventeen

Other Hard Verses



In this chapter we will study carefully a few more verses which some teachers use when they try to prove that a true believer may lose his eternal life.

Jeremiah 3.8 has the word “backsliding” in some Bibles. God put away the nation of Israel and later did the same to Judah. These nations turned away from God and went back to the false gods of the heathen. The prophet Hosea also used these words in 4.16 and 11.7. Now some people say if a Christian goes back to the world God will take away his eternal life. But the prophet was speaking about the whole nation and these verses do not apply to individual believers today. We have seen several times what the Father does to His children when they go on in sin.

In the New Testament there are four verses which use the word if. These seem to say at first that it is possible for us to lose something if we don't walk close to the Lord. This is true, but it does not mean that we could lose our eternal life. We will lose our joy at this time, and our reward in Heaven.

Read Colossians 1.22,23. Here we see that the Lord Jesus Christ wants to present us to Himself, holy and without fault, as we also see in Ephesians 5.27. The Holy Spirit was using the apostles for this purpose also; they were preaching, warning and teaching the believers, Colossians 1.28. Today the Spirit uses the writings of the apostles, the New Testament, for this same reason.

But we must continue in the faith of the Bible and not move away from the Gospel. If we give up the truth, the Lord and the Spirit cannot present us without fault, because we are going on in sin. So we are spoil-

ing the Lord's desire to have a perfect Bride.

We see the word if in 1 Thessalonians 3.8 as well. The apostles got great joy from the Thessalonians, 2.20, and here Paul did not mean that they would die if the Thessalonian believers did not stand fast in the truth. He certainly did not say that these Christians would lose their eternal life unless they stood firm. He said that he and Silas and Timothy would be very sad if they went back, but their life would be full of joy if they went on growing as believers.

Now look at 2 Timothy 2.12, also vs.11 and 13.

IF we die with Christ, we will live with Him. All believers are dead with Christ, Colossians 2.20; 3.3, and we will all live with Him forever in Heaven.

IF we suffer for Him we should endure and not give up. Then we will reign with Him when He comes.

IF we deny Him, He will deny us. It is possible but very wrong for a believer to deny that He belongs to Jesus, as Peter did. The Lord will deny us a crown or reward, and this would only be right. But this verse may mean a false professor who gives up any claim that he belongs to the Lord. In Heaven the Lord will deny that this person is His child, Matthew 10.33. In Luke 12.8,9, to "deny" is opposite to "confess".

IF we are faithless or believe not, yet He must remain faithful. Again these words have two meanings. As believers, we often do not fully believe the word of the Lord, like the disciples, Matthew 17.20; Mark 16.11,14; Luke 24.11,41. But it may also mean those who never have really believed in Him, Mark 16.16; Acts 18.24.

Either way, the Lord God remains faithful, He cannot break His Word. He must punish the one who rejects His Son; He must save those who truly believe.

God is faithful, 1 Corinthians 1.9; 10.13;

He will keep us, body, soul and spirit, 1 Thessalonians 5.24; 2 Thessalonians 3.3;

The Lord Jesus was faithful on earth, and is faithful now in Heaven, Hebrews 2.17; 3.2; and will be when He comes

again, Revelation 19.11;
God keeps His promises, Hebrews 10.23;
He will forgive our sins, 1 John 1.9;
The Creator will keep us to the end, 1 Peter 4.19.

Also consider here Hebrews 3.6. We are the house of the Lord Jesus IF we hold fast our hope to the end. We have seen in Chapter 15 that in Hebrews the Spirit was speaking to Jewish churches which might include many false professors. He warns the true believers not to turn back as others were doing.

Here He tells us that Christ lives in us as His “house,” that is, in true believers. We show and prove that we are really Christ’s by holding fast our hope until the end. Some wanted at first to be with the Christians, but gave up under pressure from the other Jews. This proved that they were never born again in the first place.

Verse 14 is much the same. Only true believers are called “partners” with Christ. They show that they really belong to Him by continuing to the end.

2 Peter 3.17 teaches us the same truth. Beloved believers might be deceived by wicked persons and led away from what they had learned, but that would not mean they lose their eternal life. Peter wrote to those who were well taught, 2 Peter 1.12, and told them that the Lord Jesus Christ can establish them and make them strong, 1 Peter 5.10. Paul taught the same thing in 1 Thessalonians 3.2,13 and 2 Thessalonians 2.17; 3.3. The Lord is strong enough to keep any of us from getting lost again.

In Galatians 2.17 you might think that we could want to be justified by Christ yet fall into sin again. Indeed it is all too possible for a true believer to commit sin, but in no way would that make Christ responsible for what we do.

But we must read several verses before v.17 to understand its proper meaning. In this chapter we learn that Peter had come to Antioch in Galatia and as usual he had meals with Gentile believers. But some Jews came from Jerusalem and tried to teach that we must keep the law of Moses to be saved. Peter did not believe or teach this, Acts 15.9, but to please these men from Jerusalem Peter stopped having meals with the

Gentile Christians. Paul saw that this was wrong, so he asked Peter before the others if it was right to teach that we are justified by faith but then act as if it was still necessary to keep the law, v.17. This would be building again the old system of salvation by works, v.18.

1 Timothy 1.6 is also about teachers who tried to force true Christians to go back to the law of Moses. The purpose of the law is love, v.5; James 2.8, but these teachers left preaching the gospel and went into arguing about fine points about the law, with little real profit. This verse does not say that they turned away from Christ and lost their eternal life. It says that they left a good conscience and tried to teach people about the law.

Matthew 24.18 is another verse which some believers find difficult. It says: He that endures to the end shall be saved. As usual, we must look at the verses before and after this one.

The disciples asked the Lord Jesus about His return, v.3. He answered their question by prophesying about:

The beginning of sorrow, vs.4-8;

The great Tribulation, vs.9-26;

The coming of the Son of Man, vs.27-31.

Many people will be killed before the Lord comes. There will be war, famines, disease, earthquakes, vs.6,7; and persecution, v.9. We read more about this in Revelation 6.8, where one person out of every four will be killed; and in Revelation 9.15, where one third of those who are left will die – half of all the people in the world! In fact, God will cut the time short so that not all men will be killed, v.22. So the Lord Jesus promised that some will continue to the end of the Tribulation period and He will come in time to save them from their enemies. Some will lose their first love, v.12, but they will be encouraged by this promise. Others will lose their lives in this world, but true believers will not lose their eternal life. (My book, *What Next? A Primer on Prophecy* will help you understand what the Bible teaches about the future.)

In 1 Corinthians 10.12 we have a strong warning about pride which can lead us into sin. Satan is ready to attack anyone who thinks that he is strong enough in his own strength to resist temptation. Peter was like that, but he fell into sin, Mark 14.29,31,68,70. He never should have gone in and sat with Christ's enemies, v.54.

The 10th chapter of 1 Corinthians teaches us about the nation of Israel: all the people had the same opportunity to know the Lord but some decided to follow the way of sin, vs.1-5. They lusted after evil things, they worshiped idols, committed sex sins, put the Lord to the test, and complained against God, vs.6-10.

We should never be too self-confident, but always trust in the Lord. God is faithful, He will not allow Satan to tempt us more than what we can resist in the strength of the Holy Spirit, v.13. We have seen that our God is faithful, 2 Timothy 2.13 , also 1 Thessalonians 5.24; 2 Thessalonians 3.3.

Anyway, falling into sin is not the same as falling into the Lake of Fire. None of these verses teaches us that a true believer can ever lose his eternal life.

Now think about 2 Corinthians 6.17. This verse teaches that we should be separate from unbelievers, unrighteousness, Belial (Satan), and idols, vs.14-16. The church is the temple of God, He dwells in us, Ephesians 2.19-22, and we cannot share as equals with false religions. So God says to keep ourselves separate even though people hate us for it. God Himself will receive us and be our God and Father. We should be holy like our Father, 1 Peter 1.15,16.

The Lord is speaking here to believers, whom He has already received. Christ receives sinners, Luke 15.2, and God receives us, Hebrews 12.6. Again these verses do not teach that God will reject us as children if we have fellowship with what is evil.

God spoke also to a believer, and to us. In 1 Timothy 4.16 Paul told Timothy to be careful and to pay attention to his teaching. He would save himself and those who heard him preach.

We know that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners, and God wants all men to be saved, 1 Timothy 1.15; 2.4. How then can Timothy save himself, or anyone else? We understand this verse to mean:

(1) the present form of salvation, that is, salvation from the power of sin in our daily lives. This is:

by the life of Christ, Romans 5.10;

by His prayer for us, Hebrews 7.25;

by the Word, James 1.21;
by obedience, 1 Peter 3.21.

This present salvation is the work of Christ but we also must be willing to obey. In this sense, Timothy could “save himself.”

(2) He could also help others to be saved, as we have seen in Romans 11.14; 1 Corinthians 7.16; 9.22. So he had to be careful how he lived and what he preached.

Again Paul told young Timothy to “take hold of eternal life,” 1 Timothy 6.12. He should “flee” from the desire to get rich; “follow” what is good, v.11; and “fight” the good fight of faith. Paul is not saying here that Timothy could earn eternal life by doing these things. Eternal life comes by faith, 1 Timothy 1.16, but we may get many benefits from that life even here and now, 4.8. Timothy should take these present benefits for himself (especially the power of the Holy Spirit) and show to all men that he had this eternal life.

Paul gave the young man a good example of the Christian “fight,” by prayer, Colossians 1.29-2.1; also Epaphras, 4.12; and by preaching, 1 Thessalonians 2.2. At the end he could say he had fought the good fight, 2 Timothy 4.7. It would be good if we all could say the same thing.

There were two great groups among the Jews: Pharisees who tried to make everyone keep the law, and the Sadducees, who said there was no resurrection, Mark 12.18; Acts 23.8. Paul answered the Jews who tried to bring Christians back under the law, for example, Galatians 1.9; 2.16; 3.11; 4.21; 5.4; 6.15.

1 Corinthians 15 is the great “resurrection” chapter, in which Paul by the Spirit answered those who were trying to teach that there is no resurrection. He shows that Christ did not rise from death IF there is no resurrection, vs.12-14. If there is no resurrection they were trusting in a dead Christ, who could not save anyone.

Some people take verse 2 by itself and say it is possible that some of the believers in Corinth “believed in vain.” This verse is saying that their faith is useless IF Christ did not rise from death. We must read verse 2 along with the rest of the chapter, and everything which the Spirit teaches in the Bible.

The same is true in Galatians 4.11. The apostle felt that his work was in

vain for those who did not fully believe that salvation is in Christ alone. We have seen that some were trusting in their own good works. They were trying to keep the law, and all such were not born again from above.

The Pharisees added their own teaching to the law of Moses and the Word of God, for example, see Matthew 15.6,9. The Sadducees accepted only the first five books of Moses, and Christ said they were ignorant of the Scriptures, Mark 12.24.

God warns us strongly not to change the Bible – neither to add to it nor take away from it, Revelation 22.18,19. Some have taken verse 19 to mean that God will take away eternal life from any believer who takes away from His Word. We have seen that this is not possible, and so we can understand this verse to mean that this person had the opportunity to be saved but did not accept the Lord. The sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient for all men, 1 John 2.2. There is provision in the tree of life for every man; there is room in God's city for all. But millions refuse and so they lose their great opportunity to be saved. God takes away the place they might have had if they had believed. They take away from the Bible those great invitations of Christ, like Matthew 11.28. They refuse to come in to God's feast, so He says they cannot come, Luke 14.18-20,24. He will not keep on inviting them. Their last opportunity will be gone.

This is very solemn and we should warn men not to keep on refusing the Lord. We should also accept the whole Scripture, all 66 books, and read the Bible, believe what we read and obey God's commands.

So we have read many verses which show that God gives us eternal life once only and never takes it away again. He will surely chasten us if we go on in sin. This is another sign of His love. So we can rest on His Word and have perfect peace.

Think of yourself as being perfectly safe:

like a little bird protected by its mother's strong wings, Psalm 91.4;

like a lamb on the strong shoulders of the great Shepherd, Luke 15.5;

like a child in the Lord's strong arms, Mark 9.36; 10.16;

like those who hear His voice and are in His hand, and in His
Father's hand, John 10.27-30;

like the beloved disciple, close to Jesus' breast, John 13.23,25,
as the Lord Jesus always was close to His Father, John 1.18.

As the poet said:

Safe in the arms of Jesus,

Safe on His loving breast.

ETERNAL SECURITY - TEST 12
OTHER HARD VERSES Chapter 17

Enter the correct answer.

1. If a Christian denies his Lord
 - a) the Lord will refuse to admit him to heaven;
 - b) the Lord will refuse to give him a reward;
 - c) the Lord will punish him forever.

2. We will lose our eternal life
 - a) if we give up before the end;
 - b) if we turn aside from preaching the gospel;
 - c) if we are not separate from every unclean thing;
 - d) None of these is true.

3. The apostle told Timothy
 - a) to lay hold on eternal life or he would lose it;
 - b) to pay attention to himself and he would have present salvation;
 - c) he could save himself but no one else.

4. We are able
 - a) to add any of our own ideas to the Bible;
 - b) to leave out of the Bible whatever we disagree with;
 - c) to believe every thing in the 66 books of God's Word.

5. We can feel safe if
 - a) we follow what the early church taught;
 - b) we know what men are thinking today;
 - c) we are in the hands of the Father and the Son.

Enter TRUE or FALSE

6. Backsliding will mean that you lose your eternal life.
7. Paul was afraid he would die unless the believers stood firm.
8. You are in no danger as long as you think you stand.
9. Our faith is useless if Christ is still dead.
10. Our Lord is quite able to keep us and present us faultless to Himself.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

What have you gained from your study of this course?

INDEX

In this a book I have asked you to look up about 600 verses in both the Old and New Testaments. This index will show you which chapter mentions these verses and so it will help you as you study God's Word.

For example, the first page of Chapter 1 says something about Genesis 2.17. In Genesis, 12 other verses are mentioned.

Suppose you are studying Exodus 2.16. Look up this verse in the Index and you will see that this book says something about it in Chapter 7. And so for most other books in the Bible. So keep right on studying the Holy Scripture.

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