

ARE WE SAVED FOREVER OR JUST FOR A WHILE?

BY ARTHUR EGGERS

PREFACE

REFERENCES USED IN THIS PUBLICATION

- **American Standard Version** (ASV or AV) is a version of the Bible that was released in 1901. It soon came to have other names, such as the American Revised Version, the American Standard Revision, the American Standard Revised Bible, and the American Standard Edition. By the time its copyright was renewed in 1929, it had come to be known by its present name, the American Standard Version.
- **Diaglott** is a two-language polyglot translation, of the New Testament by Benjamin Wilson, first published in 1864. It is an interlinear translation with the original Greek text and a word-for-word English translation in the left column, and a full English translation in the right column.
- **King James Version** (KJV) references are used throughout this publication unless otherwise noted.
- **Revised Version** (RV) (or English Revised Version) of the Bible is a late 19th-century British revision of the King James Version of 1611. It was the first and remains the only officially authorized and recognized revision of the King James Bible.
- **Wuest**: Kenneth Samuel Wuest (1893–1962) was a noted New Testament Greek (Κοινή) scholar of the mid-20th century...produced his own English translation of the New Testament (the Wuest Expanded Translation—abbreviated WET) based on Nestle's critical text.

Note: Definitions of references pulled from Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, January 2013.

DISCLAIMER

This document has been formatted, proofed, and its verbiage modernized so as to save it into an easily read and/or printed electronic format.

Several years ago a young man came to me on the pretense that he wanted to clean the carpets. He really wanted to set me straight on the fact that I could lose my salvation. I suppose that this is one of the most misunderstood teaching of the scriptures, so I would like to tell you why I believe that God's gift is forever.

The **FIRST THING TO CONSIDER** is **what the Bible teaches us about sin**. Sin is in the nature of the human race. We were born in sin...we received from our parents that which they received from their parents all the way back to Adam.

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." [Gen.6:5]

"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." [Psa.51:2-5]

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" [Rom.3:23]

"Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." [Rom.7:17]

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." [Rom.7:18]

Sin is in my flesh and I will have it as long as I am in a body of flesh. It is impregnated in my fleshly members. Let us put a label on it and call **sin** what it is; and not try to make it anything else. It is evil and corrupt and it lives inside of us.

"Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." [Rom.7:20]

The **SECOND THING** is **what the Bible teaches about the work of Christ on the cross** where Jesus was made sin in our place.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." [2Co.5:21]

"For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." [Heb.9:26-28]

Jesus was born to die for the human race.

"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." [Joh.12:27]

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." [1Pe.2:24]

Dear reader, do you understand what happened on the cross? When Jesus was born He took upon Himself the headship of Adam's descendents. All the sins of Adam's descendents (past and future) were laid upon Him as He hung on the cross between heaven and earth. He bore them all in His own body in order that we being dead should live unto righteousness. Jesus

didn't stay dead. When He was resurrected He brought out of the grave a new race of people over which He became the head. This new creation race is called; "**his body, The Church.**"

*"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to **THE CHURCH**, Which is **HIS BODY**, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." [Eph.1:18-23]*

Because God has "**enlightened**" the eyes of our understanding, we know that after Christ's resurrection He sat down at God's right hand. Also that, for this Grace Age, God has given Jesus Christ to be the head of The Church, His body. That body was in God's purpose before the world was formed.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will," [Eph.1:3-5]

The word "**us**" is the first person plural and is the object of the transitive verb "**blessed**". This is God's work; only the new creation is blessed in heavenly places. This new creation race is chosen in Christ, brought into a relationship with God and placed as sons.

The **THIRD THING** that I know is that **God's work is foolproof**. When a person of Adam's race puts their trust in the work of God on the cross and Jesus Christ as Saviour, they become a new creation.

"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" [Eph.2:6]

This is a resurrected body that is provisionally seated in heaven; because, as far as God is concerned, the believer is already seated there.

"(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." [Rom.4:17]

If God calls those things which be not, as though they were, then why can't we also agree with God? God used Abraham as an example of the believer who trusts in God's work.

"What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." [Rom.4:1]

James tells us of our being just before man.

"Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." [Jam.2:18]

At this time we are interested in what God thinks; and He thinks that Abraham was made just by faith.

*"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was **COUNTED** unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not **RECKONED** of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is **COUNTED** for righteousness." [Rom.4:3-5]*

*"And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was **IMPUTED** unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." [Jam.2:23]*

In the King James Version, the words "*counted, reckoned, and imputed,*" all have the same meaning which is "*to put on a person's account.*" God put our sins on Jesus' account and then God put Christ's righteousness on the account of the new creation that arose from the dead of which every believer is a part. Oh, what a plan of salvation!

"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." [Rom.4:25]

This is a provisional truth; it is what God has done for us. This truth must be put into practice by believing before it will help a sinner. To explain this, I like to use the example of a refrigerator. The refrigerator can be full of food, but a person could sit down in front of it and starve to death if the food isn't taken out and eaten. Once the food is eaten, it cannot be put back into the refrigerator, but is to be digested and the body is strengthened. So also is God's work. Once we receive God's salvation it cannot be taken away, but it is to fulfill God's purpose in us. God's plan of redemption is foolproof. It cannot fail. It is God's work and not man's.

"Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." [Eph.2:9-10]

Walking in "good works" is the practical side of the Gospel. We are sons, and are seated in heavenly places in Him; therefore, we should dwell in this life acting like sons.

"That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." [Eph.2:7]

Oh, how God wants to show His new creatures off! He is satisfied with the product of His work in creating such a holy people, made in the image of His Son. I am not accepted in my own righteousness, but in the righteousness of God's perfect Son.

"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." [Eph.1:6]

It is all Him. Therefore He receives all the glory.]

The **FOURTH THING** I know is that **this doctrine is contrary to human nature**. In Adam, we want to do something to appease God. This **DOING** is the basis of all heathen religions. God's people shouldn't want to be like the heathen. There are many who object to this teaching. They feel that they need some kind of law to govern their life, so they attempt to keep the 10 Commandments. When they fail, they either give up or make excuses for their failure.

God has given The Church a law and it is found in Romans 8:2: "*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*" What is this law? It is "*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another*" [Joh.13:34]. Oh, what a law! It is so wonderful that we want to give ourselves completely over to it. This law of love is not a burden but a joy; not only to us, but also to God. Only Christ has this love in Him, and He gives it to us to govern our lives.

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." [Eph.5:2]

Others may say, "This teaching will give you a license to sin." Not so!

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world (Age)."
[Tiu.2:11-12]

The message of grace not only teaches us but also enables us to live as God would want us to live. It is very difficult to be looking up and watching our feet at the same time. So let us keep looking up and trust God to lead us.

The **FIFTH THING** we need to consider is that **God's people are seen as sheep that belong to Christ.**

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." [Joh.10:27]

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any MAN pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no MAN is ABLE TO PLUCK THEM OUT of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." [Joh.10:28-30]

We are His responsibility, and no one can pluck us out of His hand or His Father's hand. I have heard people say, "Well, I can pluck myself out!" This is a foolish statement. In the first place, the Greek phrase for *"no man is able to pluck them out"* is a double negative that stresses the power of the Word and should read *"by no means"* or *"in no way can they perish."*

The Greek word for **man** is **ΤΙΣ**, and should be translated *"Any person"*. As being a part of the human race, I cannot even pluck myself out of God's hand. Study the following verses:

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." [Rom.8:38-39]

I am glad that The Apostle Paul added this phrase *"shall be able to separate us"* because I am a new creation and as such I cannot separate myself from God's love and keeping power. Someone may say, "Well how about what Hebrews 6 says about those who **FALL AWAY**, are they **backsliders**?"

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall FALL AWAY, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." [Heb.6:4-6]

There are 2 reasons this cannot be talking about backsliders:

1. First, the word **backslider** never refers to The Church, because The Church is the body of Christ and cannot slide in any direction.
2. If **backslider** referred to a child of God who sinned as *"FALLING AWAY,"* then they would be lost forever and could never be brought back even if they repented.

Then what does it mean? In Hebrews 6:4-6 there are several phrases that describe the **"FALLEN AWAY"** ones being spoken of that tell us who they are:

"For it is impossible for those who were ONCE ENLIGHTENED, and have TASTED OF THE HEAVENLY GIFT, and were MADE PARTAKERS OF THE HOLY GHOST, And have TASTED THE GOOD WORD OF GOD, AND THE POWERS OF THE WORLD TO COME, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." [Heb.6:4-6]

They are Hebrews and as such knew all about Jewish rituals. And, every time they offered a sacrifice, they were again reminded of their enlightenment, tasting, and being made partakers. Thus, they have voluntarily and consciously abandoned (fallen away from) their faith in the God of the covenant, who manifests himself most completely in Jesus Christ¹.

The blood of the sacrifices which the Hebrews made always represented the blood of Jesus. And, if they come right up to the truth of the cross and reject the provision of God, then there is nothing else that can save their soul.

"For if we (Hebrews) sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." [Heb.10:26-27]

This **willful sinning** is rejecting Jesus as Saviour. He is the only sacrifice for sins, there is none other; the only thing left is judgment.

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." [Mat.12:31]

This verse is also very misunderstood. The work of the Holy Spirit is found in John 16:

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me." [Joh.16:7-8]

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." [Joh.16:13-14]

The Holy Spirit is to tell of Jesus Christ our Lord and of His sacrifice on the cross for the salvation of the whole world. If this is spoken against, then there is no forgiveness of this sin [Mat.12:31].

The **SIXTH THING** is that **God gets all of the glory**. The credit goes to the One that does all of the work. Let us boast in Him.

"That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." [1Co.1:29-31]

If I can save myself or keep myself saved by not committing sin, then I could pat myself on the back and brag of my goodness.

If I said that baptism or speaking in tongues saved me or keeps me saved, that would give credit to the flesh.

However, since Jesus finished it all on the cross, then let us give Him all the praise. Since God has made Jesus to be our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, then why should I try to perfect God's work in any way? Why not just glory in the Lord?

"But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." [2Co.10:17]

¹ Excerpt taken from Wikipedia definition of apostasy, June 2017.

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." [Gal.6:14]

"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." [Eph.1:6]

Oh! How we praise the glory of His grace. Why? Because He has made us accepted in His Beloved Son, and no one else.

"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." [Eph.3:21]

The **SEVENTH THING** is that **God's salvation was finished and completed only at the cross** and no other place. Some say that Jesus went into hell and wrestled with the devil for our salvation. Salvation is for the whole man...spirit, soul, and body. It is present, past, and future. We can say,

- I **have been** saved from Hell and The Lake of Fire (past),
- I am **being saved** from the power of sin in my every day life which brings the healing of my body (present); and

The word saved could have been translated **DELIVERED**, so any kind of deliverance is in the work of the cross.

- When Jesus returns (future), I **will be saved** from off this earth and given a new body. The Apostle Paul states it like this: *"Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us"* [2Co.1:10].

The **EIGHTH THING** is that we **must build on the foundation laid by God not man.**

*"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation **GOLD, SILVER, PRECIOUS STONES, WOOD, HAY, STUBBLE**; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."* [1Co.3:10-15]

Our subject is building on the foundation that was laid by Paul about 2,000 years ago. Only saved people can build on this foundation as all others are dead in sin. In 1 Corinthians 3:12, we read of 6 building materials;

- Of these, 3 are highly inflammable. They are "*wood, hay, and stubble*".
- The other 3 are "*gold, silver, and precious stones*". Heat will only purify gold and silver and bring the dross to the place that it can be taken away. Precious Stones are not affected by heat.

Someone may say that diamonds will burn; but the word diamond in The Bible is not the same as we know today; it simply means "*a very hard stone*." The word used for wood is "*any dead wood*" to be used in building or "*a log laying in the woods*." Hay (grass) is for feeding cattle and stubble is corn or wheat after the heads has been removed. "*Wood, hay, stubble*" refer to false teachings that are unprofitable for spiritual growth. I think that all teachers of The Bible should

ask themselves if what they are teaching will cause others to grow up in Christ or to stumble from the Truth.

In 1 Corinthians 3:13 we read, "*Every man's (ones) works will be made manifest*," They will be uncovered at the "*judgment seat of Christ*."

*"For we must all appear before **THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST**; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."* [2Co.5:10]

Only works are in question at this point.

- Are works good or bad?
- Are works of the flesh or spirit?
- Are works truth or error?

What is the answer? The fire of Christ's judgment will determine, for if the works remain, they are good, and if the works burn they are bad. Oh! how simple.

Now let us look at 1 Corinthians 3:15. If someone has built with error, the works will be burned and this one will suffer loss of eternal reward and close fellowship with Christ. But...**he will be saved** even though he goes through the fire of Christ's judgment.

Reader, do you realize that even though one has the wrong doctrine, only his labors are lost and not his soul? He is still saved. But, oh, what a loss! Can you imagine working your whole life for something that you believe to be true and then to stand before Christ and find out that it was all wrong?

Oh, let us study the Word with much prayer, and don't listen to man's word for such an important thing as our eternal riches. Remember, "*Our God is a consuming fire*" [Heb.12:29].

SOME QUESTIONS

Last of all there are some questions that I would like to ask those who do not agree with this teaching.

1. **If I am born into the family of God by faith in Jesus Christ, how do I undo that which God has done?** In John 1 we read, "*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*" [Joh.1:12-13].
2. Another thought is, **if we become sons of God by being born again (by a new birth), then how do we become unborn out of His family, reversing what God has done?** What sin takes away the knowledge of God and Jesus?

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." [1Pe.1:23]

3. **How bad do I need to be before God takes away the gift of eternal life that He gave to me?** Surely I would need to be worse than I was before He saved me? And, if this were true, then there must be some too bad to be saved.

4. What is this eternal life that we would lose?

"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."
[Joh.17:1-3]

5. How would a person know when he had lost it all? **Can someone draw me a line so that I would know if I crossed it into eternal death?**

You might say, "These are foolish questions." I will agree, but so is the doctrine that the all-loving God would send one of His children into hell and later into The Lake of Fire. Even ungodly people do not do that to their children, and God loves us much more than they do their children.

IN SUMMARY

When we believe, our relationship is established by God through the blood of Jesus. Our fellowship is established as we are obedient to the Word of God and as we are led by the Holy Spirit. In Adam (which is my flesh), I am rotten to the uttermost...there is no good thing in me. In Christ, I am as holy as God...there is no fault to be found. This is my security and my right to be in heaven. As I become obedient to God's will, word, and work, The Holy Spirit will **work in me that which is good**. As my flesh is brought into subjection to the Holy Spirit, He will **change me to be ready** for a position in heaven that I will receive at the judgment seat of Christ.

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." [Phi.1:6]

Abraham knew that all good work had to be of God: *"And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform"* [Rom.4:21].

May The Lord reveal His grace to the heart of the reader.

-- ❖ --