Notes

THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION (Cont.)

14. Preservation: (I Thess. 5:23, 29; Jude 1) This is not the preservation of scripture (although the principle is proven here as well) but this is the preservation of the soul. This is the answer to the question of the security that accompanies salvation- permanent? Alternate? Temporal or external?

The completeness of salvation; does the Bible teach unconditional[1] and permanent[2] salvation or conditional[3] and temporary[4] salvation?

Illus: Dr. John Walvoord writes: While most believers in Christ accept the doctrine that they can have assurance of salvation at any given moment in their experience, the question is often raised "CAN A PERSON ONCE SAVED BECOME LOST AGAIN?" Since the fear of losing salvation could seriously affect a believer's peace of mind, and because his future is so vital, this question is a most important aspect of the doctrine of salvation. The claim that one who is once saved may be lost again is based on certain biblical passages which seems to raise questions concerning the continuance of salvation. In the history of the church, there have been opposing systems of interpretation known as Calvinism[5]*, in support of eternal security, and* Arminiansim[6] *in opposition to eternal security.*

Major Bible themes, Walvoord

PROBLEMS WITH ETERNAL SECURITY:

NOTE: Those holding the Arminian position confidently assure their view is supported by some 100 biblical passages, these can be considered under these topical headings presented here.

a. Passages Dealing with False Teachers: (Mt. 7:15-23; 24:11, 24; II Cor. 11:13-15; I Tim. 4:1; II Pt. 2:1-22, 3:16, 17; I Jn. 2:19; II Jn. 7; Jude 4, 10-16; Rev. 22:18-19)

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Consider: (Mt. 7:21-23) One day Jesus will say to the Apostate/false teachers and preachers "I NEVER KNEW YOU", it doesn't read (I once knew you or I used to know you) but rather "I NEVER KNEW YOU."

Consider: (II Pt. 2:20-22) These false teachers, fickle followers, they may have conformed[20] to some condition[21] (quit drinking, smoking, cursing, gambling, and stealing). They were not transformed[22] by a genuine conversion[23]. Many cults are convinced by their **conduct** rather than their **conversation**. The Lord Jesus Christ is essential to salvation, you cannot be born again without Him.

These false followers cannot be true believers, nowhere in scripture does it refer to believers as dogs or hogs (II Pt. 2:22), a sow that washed itself! Conformity, reformation[24], not regeneration[25].

b. Passages Dealing with the Act of Conversion Itself: (Mt. 10:32-33; Jn. 8:51; I Cor. 15:1-2; II Cor. 13:5, Col. 1:23; Heb. 2:1-4, 12:25, 29; James 2:14-26; I Jn. 3:6, 8, 9, 5:18; II Jn. 9)

Consider: (Jn. 8:51) What saying is Jesus referring to here? In a previous conversation (Jn. 6:28) a crowd asked Him "what shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" Our Lord answered: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him (Christ) whom He (the Father) hath sent" (Jn. 6:29).

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Consider: (II Tim. 2:12) The denial here can be tied to (I Cor. 3:15) "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved: yet so as by fire." The denial here is that of rewards[29].

Consider: (Col. 3:24-25) Rewards are in return for conduct rendered, in serving the Lord-righteous[30] or serving sinfulness- unrighteous[31]. Reaping/sowing-rewards.

d. Passages Dealing with "Missing" God's Best: (I Cor. 9:27, 10:5; Heb. 3:11-19, 4:1-15, 12:14-15)

Consider: (I Cor. 9:27) The word "castaway" is ADOKIMOS "Disapproved" not cut-off, Paul was not concerned with losing his salvation[32] (II Tim. 1:12) but his service[33] for God (usefulness) to serve in vain or of no value, put on a shelf.

Consider: (I Cor. 10:5) Israel's historical "unbelief" at Kadesh-Barnea (Num. 14) causing them to refuse entering into Palestine. Because of this, no one under 20 years of age (except Joshua and Caleb) were allowed to enter, even Moses did not enter in, this was physical not spiritual judgement, they missed the privileges that accompany salvation (a land flowing with milk and honey – spirit filled life.

NOTE: The Psalmist description of the condition (Ps. 78:37-38, 106:143-144)

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Obviously Moses' salvation was not in question; although he was not able to enjoy the fruit of the journey's end, he certainly **received the rewards of the righteousness he obtained by faith**. Moses is mentioned in several places in the New Testament (Mt. 7:14) being one of them, (Heb. 4:1, 11) exhorts believers to continue to press on to do the will of God, it is worth the struggle.

e. **Passages Dealing with God's Discipline:** (Rom. 14:23; I Cor. 11:29; I Tim. 5:16) The problem in all three verses is "damnation" or in this case "judgment[34]". It is an assessment or acknowledgement, not an action. 1) Paul refers to a believer eating certain foods he was unsure if God wanted him to eat, or not to eat. 2) Paul refers to believers partaking in the Lord's Table in an unconscious or unwarranted manner (known sin, dishonor). 3) Improper attitudes and actions of young believing widows toward mannerisms and marriage. These were not DAMNABLE offenses, but all required judgment by God. Peter summarized all this in similar manner with the same Greek word (I Pt. 4:17) see also (Heb. 12:5-11).

f. **Passages Dealing with Fruit Bearing – Witness - Testimony:** (Mt. 5:13, Jn. 8:30-32) Our Lord emphasized this (Jn. 10:10) "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." All believers have life, but only Spirit filled believers – fruit bearing believers[35] have abundant life[36].

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Consider: (Jn. 15:6) Men[37], gather these fruitless branches and burn them, not God[38], as in Jesus' sermon on the mount, how important is the believers testimony of fruit bearing, evidencing salvation, not before God, but men. (Acts 13:43, 14:22; James 1:26; II Pt. 1:9-11; I Jn. 2:24).

g. Passages Dealing with Believers Influenced by False Doctrine: (II Cor. 11:2-4; Gal. 5:4; Col. 2:4, 8, 18; I Thess. 3:5; I Tim. 1:6, 19, 20, 6:20, 21; II Tim. 2:18-26; Eph. 4:14) The apostle Paul confirms the continual growth of a believer is absolutely essential to discerning[39] false doctrine and destroying[40] the usefulness of witness.

1) False Doctrine LEGALISM: (Gal 5:4) Arminian theology puts heavy emphasis on the (proof-text) especially "ye are fallen from grace". But we need simply to ask what had caused them to fall? It was a frantic (and fruitless) effort to fulfill Mosaic Law. Does this mean that a believer who does his best to perform good works will lose his salvation? Of course not! Paul corrects these Galatians not for evil against the law, but for their efforts in trying to keep the law. To FALL FROM GRACE (TO FAIL OF GRACE) is allowing the legalism of the law[41] to keep believers from enjoying the full liberty of love[42] and grace.

NOTE: It is possible both Peter (Gal. 2:11-14) and James (Acts 21:18-26) "fell from grace" for a while over this matter (I Tim. 1:6-7).

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i. **Passages Dealing with the Unpardonable Sin:** (Mt. 12:31-32) These two passages cause saved and unsaved alike a great deal of conflict and controversy so we shall consider two questions concerning the context.

1) **To whom did Jesus address these statements?** (v:24, 25) confirm they were directed to the wicked, unbelieving Pharisees[52].

2) **What grievous sin had they committed?** They had seen, heard, and even experienced many of the marvelous miracles manifest before them by the Messiah, but they refused to believe[53;] they denied Him, and they discouraged others from believing on Him. This sin was committed by those who cast aside the living Christ while He was present on earth. It wasn't that they couldn't believe (all the evidence was before them) but they "would not believe, that they might have life."

j. **Passages Dealing with the Nation of Israel and Tribulation:** (Mt. 22:1-13, 24:13, 45-51, 25:1-30; Lk. 13:23-30) These verses deal with individuals[54], unsaved Hebrews, Israelites, Jews who live during the Tribulation and survive to the coming of Christ, yet they have made no spiritual preparation to believe or receive. Jesus uses **5 parables to confirm their condemning condition**, unprepared at Christ's coming for His kingdom.

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1) **The parable of the wedding guest without a wedding garment** (Mt. 22:1-13)
2) **The parable of the unfaithful servant** (Mt. 24:45-51)
3) **The parable of the ten virgins** (Mt. 25:1-13)
4) **The parable of the eight talents** (Mt. 25:14-30)
5) **The parable of the shut door** (Lk. 13:23-30)

NOTE: Mt. 24 deals with "physical survival" prior to the Tribulation, during the Tribulation and at the conclusion of the 7 year Tribulation. National and individual the Hebrews are subject in (v:3, 6, 14) "end" of the 70th week.

k. **Passages Dealing with the Gentile Nations:** (Rom. 11:13-24, note: 21, 22) The context is critical to the correct interpretation and application.

1) **To whom is Paul speaking?** Addressing in particular, v:13 Gentiles[55]
2) **What is the subject matter?** Rom. 4:23-25) Gentile opportunity to partake in this spiritual blessing of Abraham[56]
3) **Who are the broken branches?** (Rom. 11:17) Israel/Nationally – individually unbelief, they refused to believe the message of the Messiah[57] (Mt. 21:42-43)
4) **Who are the branches grafted in?** The Gentiles, those who believe and receive! The conclusion is clear from the content and the context, this is not about losing salvation, but rather what Gentiles gain by Israel's unbelieving and forfeiting their salvation[58]

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n. **Passages Dealing with Destruction of Jerusalem/Nebuchadnezzar** (Ez. 3:17-21, 33:8) Ezekiel's record is from 597 B.C, from Babylon where he was taken in captivity prior to the final fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. While in exile he was commissioned by God to be a "watchman unto the house of Israel." (Ez. 3:17, 33:7) He warned those still alive and left behind in Jerusalem to repent[60] or receive[61] more judgment, but they refused[62]. They survived Nebuchadnezzar's first (605 B.C) attacks, his second (597 B.C) siege, and they had no fear or need to repent, for they still remained (but not for long).

o. **Passages Dealing with Certain Issues:** (Mt. 18:21-35) Forgiveness when discerning and discovering the messages in parable- there is a danger of over-developing every detail and declaring meaning to each mention. For example, v:25, should we infer the man's wife and children will be sent to hell by God because of the husband's sin debt? (Mt. 18:25). Of course not, (Ez. 18:20) soundly refutes that, as well as many other passages. The key to the parable is founded in the following passage where Peter asks the Lord how often a believer should forgive someone (Mt. 18:21-22).

p. **Passages Dealing with the Book of Life:** The physical life and record, names being removed because they never had eternal life, and the Lamb's Book of Life, the record of those who have eternal life, not just physical life (see series on God's Library, the Books of Record – Pastor Smith 2019).

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4) **JUDAS:** Perhaps the world's most notorious traitor, was an apostle, the treasurer of the Lord's ministry. He was well disguised among them, but Scripture is clear he was never saved. (Lk. 22:3, 22; Jn. 6:70-71, 12:4-6, 13:27)

   (Mt. 27:3-5) The repentance Judas offered is merely an emotional regret 'Metamelomai', not of 'Metanoeo', moral and spiritual guilt. Sorry that things happened the way they did, surely he knew he was wrong in what he did, he knew Jesus was innocent, and not worthy of death. He tried to reverse his actions by returning the money, but it was too late. In remorse he hanged himself (all of his actions were prophetic), he sought no genuine repentance from the Lord or the apostles. (Acts 1:24-25) He did not fall from salvation, he fell from apostleship, he is the example of the unsaved Christian workers Jesus spoke of in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 7:21-23). Judas had done all these things (Mt. 10; Lk. 10), but not as a saved man!

5) **SIMON:** In (Jn. 2:23-25) It's recorded that many people tagged along on the bandwagon of Jesus' ministry to take advantage of the miracles- yet they never embraced the message (Acts 8:5-25). In Acts chapter eight Simon "believed" (8:6) even was baptized (8:13) but what he believed was the miracles of Philip, of Jesus, and he converted to take advantage of it. He was close enough to see, to hear, to taste and to touch yet he did not believe and could not receive.

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