

The Old-Time Evangelistic News

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Can Salvation Be Lost?(Part 4) (Hebrews 5:5-10)

We continue this month considering whether salvation can be lost. As we compare Scripture with Scripture, we must come to the resounding conclusion that salvation **cannot** be lost. In proving that salvation cannot be lost, we asked ourselves, “Why do people teach that it can be lost?” We have three reasons: 1) They Misunderstand What Salvation Is; 2) They Misinterpret What Scripture Says; and 3) They are guilty of a Misguiding by Self and Satan. We have spent the last three months looking at how some have **A Misunderstanding of What Salvation Is**. We have considered various aspects of salvation such as Justification, Redemption, Propitiation, and Imputation. If one truly understands what happens at salvation, I do not see any way that they can teach that salvation can be lost. There is no reversal of any of these. As we tried to point out in previous issues, once justification, redemption, propitiation, and imputation take place, it is permanent. Therefore, salvation is permanent. It cannot be lost.

There are five other aspects of salvation that I want us to consider. The first is Forgiveness. The various forms of the word forgive—forgive, forgiven, forgiveness, forgivenesses, etc.—are found over 100 times in Scripture. Forgive means “an act of pardon; to send off or away.” Consider three of the verses that mention forgiveness: 1) Psalm 86:5—“*For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.*” 2) Acts 13:38—“*Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.*” 3) I John 2:12—“*I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake.*” While it is true that some verses talk about the forgiveness of particular sins, and a verse like I John 1:9 talks about the forgiveness of sin after salvation in order to keep

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fellowship with God, the verses mentioned above, at least to me, talk about the forgiveness of the totality of sin. Psalm 86:5 gives us The Possibility of Forgiveness, Acts 13:38 describes for us The Proclamation of Forgiveness, and I John 2:12 provides for us The Perfection of Forgiveness. While it is impossible in this article to give an analysis of every verse that mentions forgiveness, these verses alone should prove our thesis that salvation cannot be lost. Paul’s sermon in Acts 13 talks about a salvation that is complete. He preaches a total forgiveness. He does not say that you can get forgiveness now, but you have to ask forgiveness for every sin in order to keep salvation. The forgiveness described in these verses is a total, once for all, forgiveness for all sin for all time. It covers past and future sins. There is no mention anywhere in Scripture where a saved person has to receive forgiveness in order to obtain salvation that has been lost. We do have to ask forgiveness to have fellowship restored, but our eternal destiny is settled. God has forgiven us of our sin debt for all of eternity. We will never be held accountable for our sin if we have received Jesus as our Savior. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives us of all of our sin. A beautiful picture of forgiveness is found in Psalm 103:12, “*As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*” That is a permanent result of total forgiveness. All of our sins—past, present, and future—are forgiven and removed from the mind of God.

Another aspect of salvation is Reconciliation. In various forms—reconcile, reconciled, reconciliation, and reconciling—it is found 23 times in Scripture. It means “to make peace between enemies.” Notice three of the passages that mention reconciliation. II Corinthians 5:18-19 says, “*And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*” Ephesians 2:13 says, “*But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*” And Colossians 1:21-22 says, “*And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh*

through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprovable in his sight.” What a wonderful, glorious thought reconciliation is! We are unrighteous, and separated from God because of it. We must be brought to God in order to have access to heaven, but there is nothing that we can do to bring ourselves to God. If we offer our righteousness, it will be rejected because “*all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*” What can give us access to heaven and the presence of God? What can bring us nigh unto God? What can reconcile us to God? It is Jesus and what He accomplished upon the cross.

But can reconciliation be canceled? Can we be unreconciled? Absolutely not! There is nothing whatsoever anywhere in Scripture that teaches that once we are reconciled to God we can be separated from Him. The passages that speak about reconciliation say nothing about the possibility of being unreconciled. In fact the word unreconcile is not in Scripture. You would think that great care would have been made by the Holy Ghost to warn against what could cancel the reconciliation between a believer and God. But there is no warning because nothing can cancel that reconciliation. Remember what Romans 8:38-39 says. Paul lists ten things and says that none of them can separate us from the love of God. None of them can cause us to be unreconciled. Rejoice believer! Our reconciliation is complete and forever. We are made nigh by the blood of Christ—forever! Hallelujah!

We can also consider the truth of Ransom. It means “to deliver a person by paying a price.” It is found 16 times in Scripture in the forms of ransom and ransomed. Among the verses are Matthew 20:28—“*Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*” Another verse is I Timothy 2:6—“*Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*” This too is a glorious thought! Christ has paid the price for us to be delivered. The price was His death and blood. He paid the price to eternal holiness, to the divine law, and to the claims of God who is by nature the Holy lawgiver. The holiness of God demanded our punishment, but Christ paid our debt by dying on the cross. If we accept His work as our payment, we are saved forever. If Christ has

bought us, then we are His. If we can lose our salvation, to whom then is He going to sell us? Will we go back to being under the holiness of God and the law? That cannot be. Once we come to Christ, we cannot be sold back. The very idea is ludicrous. We are His and His forever.

The next aspect of salvation is Regeneration. It means “the spiritual change in a man wrought by the Holy Ghost whereby the sinner goes from spiritual death to spiritual life.” The word regeneration is unique in that it is only used one time in Scripture in relation to salvation. That is in Titus 3:5. (The other time the word is found is in Matthew 19:28. There it speaks of Christ’s second coming and the making of things new that takes place.) However, the subject of regeneration is found about 15 times in Scripture. In those places it is translated with the words born again and born of God. It is what Jesus is describing to Nicodemus in John 3. Notice John 3:3—“*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*” Jesus repeats the thought in John 3:7 when He says, “*Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*” What did Jesus mean when He said that a man had to be “born again”? He is saying that he has to be made completely over. He is saying that he has to be made alive. Man by his physical birth is physically alive, but he is spiritually dead. To be made alive spiritually, he must be born again or born a second time. How does that take place? Titus 3:5 tells us, “*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*” Do not be confused, the washing is not baptism. It is not a physical work. It is a spiritual work wrought by the Holy Ghost. At the moment of faith in Christ, the Holy Ghost causes us to pass from death unto life. No longer are we under condemnation. No longer are we spiritually dead. No longer do we face the wrath of God. We have been made alive, and it is forever. Nothing anywhere in Scripture indicates that anything can make us spiritually dead again. We do not have to worry about ever dying spiritually. We have been made alive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and nothing can change it.

The final aspect of salvation that we will consider is Adoption.

Adoption is mentioned 5 times in Scripture and means “the placing of a son; the taking by one man of the son of another to be his son, so that the new son has the same position and all the advantages of a son by birth.” This is a wonderful truth that will be fully realized at the resurrection. The adoption mentioned in Scripture is different than our modern adoption. We normally think of adopting children, but in Roman times the adoption was of adult men. Usually a man from a poor family would be taken into a wealthy family and given all the rights that a natural-born child would have. That is what has happened to us. We who by nature were children of wrath have been birthed into the family of God. To take it a step further we have been made heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. The full realization of that is beyond my comprehension, but I do know that we have inherited eternal life and the splendors of Heaven. That is enough for me, but there is much more than that to enjoy with salvation. Time and words could not exhaust all that salvation bestows upon unworthy sinners. It is wonderful to think that an adopted son could never be disowned. This is a beautiful picture of salvation. We are God’s sons forever. He will never disown us.

I hope that in discussing these nine aspects of salvation, we now have a clearer understanding of what salvation is. When we understand salvation, we will see that it is forever. Salvation cannot be lost!