



False Concept of Salvation

The following are brief explanations of some verses that have been distorted to deceive people in believing that salvation can be lost.

Matthew 24:13 *But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.* Some think this verse means a person will not go to heaven unless he continues to do good until he dies. They are confused by thinking the word “saved” refers to eternal salvation when actually, it refers to physical deliverance. The context of chapter 24 clearly refers to people who become believers during the Tribulation and survive up to the end. They will then be physically delivered from the judgment that occurs when the Lord returns so that they can populate the earth during the Millennium. Their deliverance is from the baptism of fire.

James 2:14, 17, 24 *What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself You see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.* People quote this verse when trying to prove that good works must be added to faith in order to be saved. But notice that James is writing to “brethren”, people who are already saved. He was not warning believers that their eternal security was in jeopardy but that they were in danger of an untimely death due to a dead faith that produced no good works.

Believers who choose to rebel against their heavenly Father by living a fruitless unprincipled life are in danger of an early physical death (sin unto death) Proverbs 11:19 - As righteousness leads to [prolonged] life, so he who pursues evil pursues it to his own death. God sometimes disciplines an arrogant indifferent believer by taking him out of this world.

The Bible is full of commands to do good works but many believers ignore them because they have no motivation to please neither God nor compassion for their fellow man. James calls this a “dead faith”. It cannot cause him to lose his salvation but it can cause him to: Come under divine discipline to the point of losing his physical life, Lose rewards in heaven. Have no witness before unbelievers.

The key to understanding what James has written is to recognize that there are two kinds of justification. One is by faith and the other is by works. We are justified before God by our faith and we are justified before other people by our works. We are not justified before God by our faith and our works; that is heresy!

Mark 16:16 *He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned.* Some think this verse makes water baptism a condition for salvation. Notice carefully that this verse does not say, “he who does not believe and is not baptized shall be condemned”. Only unbelief condemns. No lack of good works, including water baptism, can condemn a person. The baptism mentioned is not the ritual of water baptism but the Baptism of the Holy Spirit which is a work accomplished by God for us at the moment we accept Christ (I Cor. 12:13) in which God the Holy Spirit permanently identifies us with Jesus Christ by placing us in union with Him.

Hebrews 6:4-6 *For it is impossible to renew to repentance those who . . . have fallen away since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.* Is this saying that a person can lose eternal life and that once he has, it is impossible to get it back? Absolutely not! This was written to Jews who had believed in Jesus Christ but continued to sacrifice animals even after Christ was sacrificed on the cross. It was hard for them to stop observing a ritual that their ancestors had observed for over a thousand years. So the writer of Hebrews reminded them in Hebrews 10:12. But He, having offered one Sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God.

These Jewish believers had fallen away from the fundamentals of the Christian faith which they had been taught. Every time they sacrificed an animal they were again crucifying the Son of God and putting Him up to an open shame, as if His sacrifice was not sufficient. As long as they continued to do this, it was impossible to renew them to “repentance”, which means to “change their mind” to line up with correct fundamental doctrines.

Philippians 2:12-13 *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling . . .* Again, this was written to believers who already possessed eternal life. The word “salvation” causes confusion because most people automatically equate it with eternal life. But this is never its meaning in the entire book of Philippians. It is used to convey the idea of being physically delivered from something. From what do believers need delivering?

Before this can be answered, one must first understand that some believers are winners and some are losers. The winners are obedient to the commands of God such as growing up spiritually by studying the Word (II Tim. 2:15), confessing sins (I John 1:9), unconditionally loving others (John 13:34), and doing good works (Eph.2:10), just to name a few.

They will receive rewards, decorations, special blessings and privileges that will last for all eternity. Loser believers waste their time on earth by being disobedient and indifferent to God and His Word. They have bought Satan’s lie that

happiness and contentment can be found in money, sex, power, friends, a big house, a different spouse, a fun time, etc. Consequently, they never grow up spiritually and they lose out on the great things that winner believers receive. "Working out your salvation" is a call to be a winner believer. It is a plea to be delivered from the miserable life and losses of the loser believer. Fear and trembling are mentioned in this verse to warn believers that losing eternal rewards is no trivial matter.

Galatians 5:4 *You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by the law; you have fallen from grace.* There is a big difference between an unbeliever who is condemned for rejecting God's grace and a believer who has drifted off course by trying to maintain his salvation by works. The Galatians believers fell for the lies of the Jews that salvation is secured by keeping the Mosaic Law. They fell away from the correct teaching that salvation is obtained and maintained entirely by God's grace. The Greek word used for falling away is "ekpipto" which means to drift off course. Believers drift off course when they exchange grace and freedom for the slavery of legalism and divine discipline.

Hebrews 10:26 *For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins* but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. All sin is willful in the sense that we sin because we want to. However the willful sinning here refers to believers who have abandoned the Christian faith.

They have deliberately ignored the commands (in 10:23 and 10:25) instructing them to, "hold fast the confidence of their hope without wavering" and "forsake not the assembling of ourselves together". They had trampled under foot the Son of God, regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which they were sanctified, and insulted the Spirit of grace (10:29). These apostate believers had abandoned their faith in the only true sacrifice, (Christ's) and were being reminded that there is no other acceptable sacrifice for sins. They were being warned to expect stinging divine discipline that is compared to the fury of fire that would consume the adversaries of the Christian faith which they had joined.

Hebrews 10:39 sums up this idea by saying, "We are not of those who shrink back to destruction (loss of eternal rewards and severe divine discipline) but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul (a life free from the divine discipline of a premature death).

DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

Salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Faith is the only system of perception that is totally devoid of any human merit. Only the object has merit, and in salvation the object of faith is Our Lord Jesus Christ. No one has ever been saved by asking Jesus to come into his heart or life.

How much faith does it take to be saved? It takes just a little bit more than no faith at all.

The perfect salvation work of Christ on the cross, which is called expiation, excludes anything else being added to faith. No works of any kind are allowed.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that [salvation] not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

What is grace in relationship to salvation? Grace is all that God is free to do for unsaved mankind on the basis of the saving work of Christ on the cross. Grace is extended to unbelievers, who are living under spiritual death in total depravity and total helplessness regarding salvation. Therefore, salvation is a matter of grace, and entirely the work of God. Salvation is the work of the Father in judging our sins, the work of the Son in being judged for our sins, and the work of the Holy Spirit in common and efficacious grace. This is why the way of salvation is faith in Jesus Christ -- faith alone with no works or emotions added to it.

Lake of Fire

The Lake of Fire is the final destination for both fallen angels and unbelieving mankind, and it is both literal and eternal. The Lake of Fire was prepared originally for Satan and his fallen angels.

Matthew 25:41 Then He will also say to those on His left, "Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;"

However, unbelievers will also go there, with no way of escape.

John 3:18 He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:36 He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

Hebrews 9:27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

The first occupants of the Lake of Fire will be the beast and false prophet of the Tribulation, Revelation 19:20. The devil will also be in the Lake of Fire, Revelation 20:10. After the Great White Throne Judgment, the unbelievers of the human race will also occupy the Lake of Fire, Revelation 20:14. Unbelievers are

pulled out of the fire of Hades, judged, and cast into the Lake of Fire, Revelation 20:15 and 21:8.

Both torments in Hades and the Lake of Fire are vividly described in Mark 9:48, where their worm does not die [this represents the conscience], and the fire is not quenched. Everyone should hear the screams of those who die burning in total agony, so that they will understand the importance of believing in Jesus Christ. In eternity, the screams never stop; they go on forever and ever and ever, simply because the souls there refused the so great salvation provided by Jesus Christ.

There is a place of final destiny for every member of the human race who has rejected the Gospel and the doctrine of salvation. It is described as: a place of torment, Luke 16:28; a place where desire is never met, Luke 16:24; a bottomless pit, Revelation 9:2; outer darkness, Matthew 8:12; fire unquenchable, Luke 3:17; the furnace of fire, Matthew 13:42. It is a place of unspeakable misery, indicated by the phrase eternal fire. Many believe it is a place with a liquid form of lava referred to as the lake, which burns with fire and brimstone, Revelation 21:8. It is described as black darkness in Jude v.13; a place of weeping and gnashing of teeth, Matthew 13:50; and it is said about those in Hell that ...the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, in Revelation 14:11.

If this is all true, then we should all see the value of understanding the doctrine of salvation; and by understanding it, also being accurate in its presentation. God is perfect and His ways are perfect and accurate. This is why Ephesians 5:15 says, Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise.

Salvation by Works is Rejected by the Word of God

There are at least eight categories of salvation by works rejected by the Word of God, as stated in Ephesians 2:9, not as a result of works. They are as follows:

1. SALVATION BY VERBAL WORKS

Repent and believe. Repent means to change your mind about Christ, as occurs under the Holy Spirit's ministry of common grace. The word repent has been misinterpreted as feeling sorry. No one is saved by feeling sorry for his sins.

Confession of sins. This is only for the believer after salvation.

Begging God to save you. This is ridiculous, coming from one who is spiritually dead.

Inviting Christ into your heart. This is total nonsense and blasphemy. A spiritually dead person cannot invite Eternal God, The Lord Jesus Christ,

anywhere; not into his heart, or his home, or his life. It is stupidity, asininity, emotion, and works.

Acknowledging Christ publicly. This is not effectual for salvation. It is a distortion of Romans 10:9-10 which refers to cause and effect. The cause is faith; the result, as the believer matures, is to witness and to acknowledge Christ.

2. SALVATION BY RITUAL WORKS

Circumcision. This was a favorite of the Jews. The book of Galatians was written to correct this issue. The Galatians were typical Gaelic people, and they were very excited about Paul's ministry, responded to it, and became believers. However, after Paul left, the Judaizers counteracted, telling these new believers that they could not be truly saved until they were also circumcised. The new Gentile believers accepted the idea, so Paul wrote Galatians, a letter telling them that they had gone astray from the Gospel. Paul likened the Galatians to the priests who had mutilated themselves to impress God, which of course didn't work.

Baptism. The idea of salvation by baptism is prominent today. It was started by the Catholics, and copied by the Lutherans during the Reformation. It is a heresy that has always existed in the Church Age. In reality, baptism was a testimony to, and identification with, retroactive positional truth and current positional truth, prior to the completion of the Canon.

Partaking of the Eucharist. This is a favorite of Roman Catholicism, which teaches that The Lord Jesus Christ goes back into their body, after having left it, through the taking in of the Eucharist.

3. SALVATION BY PSYCHOLOGICAL WORKS

Come forward in an invitation extended at the end of a service.

Raise your hand during prayer.

Walk down an aisle.

Give public testimony to your faith in Christ.

These make an issue of yourself and call attention to yourself. But salvation is designed to call attention to Jesus Christ and no one else.

4. SALVATION BY CORPORATE WORKS

Join the church. If you don't join, you are not saved.

Tithe. This was commanded in the Mosaic Law as a 10% income tax for the client nation Israel. Tithing has no spiritual connotation, either for salvation or blessing. Giving is a matter of the privacy of your own priesthood,

and the amount you give is based on your own self-determination and has nothing to do with any blessing.

Church-related works. Just work faithfully around the church and God will save you.

5. SALVATION BY RELIGIOUS WORKS

Satan counterfeits Christianity through religion. Religion is one of the greatest systems of both moral and immoral degeneration.

Keep the Mosaic Law. This is a result of the Reformation. It started out with justification by faith, but it gradually moved to the works of keeping the Law and eventually developed into the Galatian compromise, which stated, first you have to believe in Christ, then you have to keep the Law.

Do penance. A favorite of Catholicism. The noun penance has basically three meanings: (1) remorse for your past conduct; (2) a Catholic sacrament: repentance and confession, then satisfaction and absolution; and (3) self-mortification, self-abasement, i.e. voluntary self-punishment in order to atone for some wrongdoing. All of these are in direct contradiction to the finished work on the cross.

Practice the Lordship of Christ. This refers to the false doctrine taught which says, "if Christ is not Lord of all, He's not Lord AT ALL". This is a failure to understand one of the forty-plus things done for us at the moment of salvation. By the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, which enters us into union with Christ, He is Our Lord at the very moment of salvation. Whether we recognize this or not is a matter of cognition of pertinent doctrine. Regardless, we do not have to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord to receive salvation. It is simply believe in Christ.

Practice asceticism. What we give up at any time is inconsequential! People want to take what they have sacrificed or given up in their lives and compare it with the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

Self-denial and maintaining a healthy body. To associate salvation or spirituality with health foods and vitamins is ludicrous.

6. SALVATION BY BEHAVIORAL WORKS

Salvation by morality. Morality has to do with establishment; it is not the Christian way of life. The pre-designed plan of God is higher than morality. Moral degeneracy is very prominent in Christianity today, whereby Christians in their arrogant self-righteousness are trying to straighten everyone and everything

out, by superimposing Christian laws and standards on both believer and unbeliever.

Salvation by personality change. Although a change in one's personality may be desirable, it is not the means of salvation.

Salvation by keeping taboos. Many think you cannot really be saved unless you stop drinking, smoking, dancing, wearing makeup, swimming in mixed company, etc.

7. SALVATION BY EMOTIONAL WORKS

Faith is a non-meritorious act of perception and has nothing to do with emotion!

Salvation by ecstasies, or speaking in tongues. No one has legitimately spoken in tongues since August of 70 A.D. The gift of tongues was a temporary spiritual gift at the beginning of the Church Age to evangelize Jews in Gentile languages, as prophesied in Isaiah 28. Where people allege that speaking in tongues, or the so-called second blessing, is necessary for salvation, they are either very emotional or demon possessed.

Salvation through "feeling" saved, or weeping tears at the altar. Again, faith has nothing to do with emotion.

8. SALVATION BY INVITATION

We do not invite Christ anywhere. He does not come to us; we come to Him by believing in Him. Remember Our Lord's invitation in Matthew 11:28: "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

John 6:35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in me will never thirst."

John 6:37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."

John 6:47 explains what it means to come to Christ: "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes [in Me] has eternal life." Always in the salvation invitation we go to Jesus Christ; He does not come to us. Therefore, note that there are three blasphemous invitations:

We do not invite Christ to come to us. Revelation 3:20 is addressed to believers: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me." This is a verse dealing with recovery from carnality, and has nothing to do with salvation.

We do not invite Christ into our heart. Jeremiah 17.9 teaches about our heart, The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it? Inviting Christ into our heart is an emotional form of legalism.

We do not invite Christ into our life. Romans 5:12 teaches about our life, Therefore, just as through one man, sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.

The unbeliever is under spiritual death, which means total depravity and being completely cut off from God. We do not invite Jesus Christ into a state of total depravity, and we do not invite Jesus Christ into spiritual death. We make no invitations to Jesus Christ! If that is all you've ever done, you had better believe in Jesus Christ or you will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire. Salvation is through faith alone in Christ alone; He invites us to come to Him – we do not invite Him to come to us.

Faith Plus Nothing as the Condition for Eternal Salvation

Salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone; nothing is added. There are three reasons for faith plus nothing as the condition for eternal salvation:

1. Efficacious grace (God doing the work and God getting the credit), documented by Ephesians 2:8-9.
2. Our Lord's utterance on the cross, "Tetelestia!" [It is finished, with the result that it stands finished.]
3. The direct statement of Scripture.

COMMON AND EFFICACIOUS GRACE

Efficacious grace fits into the pattern of faith alone. When the spiritually dead person responds to the divine call or invitation to eternal salvation, he simply responds by believing in Jesus Christ. This is classified as faith alone, or faith plus nothing. When the spiritually dead person simply believes in Christ, God the Holy Spirit causes the faith to be effective for eternal life. This is classified as efficacious grace, or the Doctrine of Effectual Faith. The faith of the spiritually dead person indicates positive volition and a non-meritorious function that is compatible with grace. However, because the spiritually dead person who believes in Christ is helpless, his faith is ineffective without the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's efficacious grace causes the unbeliever's faith to be effective. However, no works can be added to faith. The Holy Spirit can only make faith and faith alone effective for salvation. Any works added to faith in Christ are dead works, and the Holy Spirit does not make dead works effective for salvation. Principle: If a person adds any works at the moment of believing in Jesus Christ, he or she is NOT saved at that point. If anything at all is added to faith, God the Holy Spirit will not touch it, and so there is no efficacious grace.

The omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit will make effectual only non-meritorious faith alone in Jesus Christ.

The very nature of real spiritual death at birth eliminates any system of salvation by works. The spiritually dead person is incapable of doing anything to obtain salvation. Spiritual death at birth includes: (1) total depravity, which means moral or immoral degeneration; (2) total separation from God; (3) total helplessness to attain a relationship with God; and (4) dichotomy, which is having only a body and soul, without a human spirit. Because of all this, we are unable to understand the simplest concepts of the Gospel. The spiritually dead person can only produce dead works, which have no validity with God.

In the function of evangelism, there are two acts of human volition: (1) hearing the Gospel, which is non-meritorious; and (2) believing in Jesus Christ, which is non-meritorious. However, the spiritually dead person is unable to understand what he hears, and powerless to make his faith in Christ effective for salvation.

The sequence of the pre-salvation grace ministry of God is as follows:

1. In common grace, the Holy Spirit makes the gospel message perspicuous [clear and understandable], to a spiritually dead individual.

1Corinthians 2:14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

2. God the Father invites the spiritually dead person to believe in Christ, which is referred to as the divine call.

3. The spiritually dead person believes in Christ, and the Holy Spirit causes faith to be effective for salvation, which is called efficacious grace.

The spiritually dead person can choose to listen to the Gospel and believe in Christ; but these two decisions come from spiritual death and are powerless to provide salvation or make faith effective. Therefore, pre-salvation clarification of the Gospel is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit. The omnipotence of God provides the ability for the unbeliever to understand the Gospel, believe in Jesus Christ, and to accept the invitation. At the moment of simply believing, the Holy Spirit makes our faith effective for salvation.

When any works are added to faith in Christ, the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit will not cause that faith to be effective. The reason is because divine omnipotence and human works, or human power, are mutually exclusive and mutually restrictive. Consequently, human works added to faith in Christ cancels faith because human works is human power, which is rejected by grace.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that [salvation] not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Both charis [grace] and pistis [faith] are in the feminine gender. Then follows the peritactic kai, translated and, which is used to coordinate expressions that have no syntactical relationship in the Greek. This is followed by the neuter gender of the immediate demonstrative pronoun houtos which cannot refer to either grace or faith. And so the phrase and that refers to salvation in general; ... that [salvation is] not of yourselves, because it is the gift of God under the grace ministry of the Holy Spirit. We are spiritually dead, meaning we are under total depravity, total separation from God, and totally helpless to do anything about it. Being spiritually dead, we cannot even understand the Gospel because we have spiritual brain death. So, first the Holy Spirit makes the Gospel clear and understandable through common grace. Then when we believe, by expressing positive volition toward the salvation work of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit takes our faith [positive volition] and makes it effectual for salvation. Therefore, salvation is not from ourselves, because it is a matter of common grace, the divine call, and efficacious grace; and that is why it is referred to as a gift from God.