

Bible Study on “*Restoration of Lost Salvation*” Lesson II

Introduction

Once a Christian surrenders his heart to the Lord in salvation, can that salvation be forfeited? Can they lose their eternal place with God? This question is answered in the previous lesson “*Salvation by Faith*” or “*Eternal Security*.” As the Bible clearly teaches, our salvation is by faith in Christ alone. This faith is based upon the biblical truth that a person is created by God as a “free moral agent.” As a free moral agent, if a person chooses to accept Christ, he must not stop short in his commitment or his salvation can be forfeited. If you agree that this statement is Biblically sound, then the only question remaining is: “Can lost salvation be restored or is that person lost forever without any hope of reconciliation? Let us examine the scriptures to embrace a true understanding on this important issue.

Contrasting Scriptures

1. SCRIPTURE THAT TEACH THAT FORFEITED SALVATION CANNOT BE RESTORED

Jude 1: 11-13 “Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.”

Comment: *The scripture is speaking about the “ungodly.” These are individuals that choose to follow a path that leads them astray. They are New Testament believers who followed the Old Testament examples of Cain, Balaam, and Korah. Notice some important things concerning these individuals. 1. They erred from God- “ran speedily after error of reward”. 2. Their past works are unacceptable and forgotten by God- “trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit...” 3. Although they were once alive, now, they are spiritually dead in the eyes of God- “twice dead, plucked up by the roots”. These scripture teaches that some people can lose their salvation and become forever lost. Does this truth include all individuals who chose to turn back after salvation? To get a true understanding, let us continue with our study and seek the true and balanced interpretation of truth.*

Hebrews 6:4-6 “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.”

Hebrews 10:26-29 “For if we sin willfully 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. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son

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of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”

John 15:6 “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”

Comment: *All of the scriptures point to the same truth, “some Christian Believers can turn from God, lose their salvation,, and become forever lost.” According to the Word of God, these individuals can never be saved again. Does this include all backslidden Christians? Let’s look carefully at the description of these individuals. These individuals were described as having received special endowments from God. They 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,” and they, “sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth...” The special endowments pointed out in scripture must not be overlooked if we sincerely want to establish a true and accurate foundation for our belief upon this subject. We will look again at this matter later in our study.*

2. SCRIPTURE THAT TEACH THAT FORFEITED SALVATION CAN BE RESTORED

Luke 15:4-5 “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.”

Luke 15:21,24 “And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.”

Acts 8:12 “But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women”. Act 8:13 “Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.”

Acts 8:18-24 “And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.”

Comment: *Repent is the key word. Simon had already believed, repented, and was baptized. He was in all ways a saved person. Afterwards, his heart again became entangled with sin. He no longer was in good standing with God. Peter warned him “thy heart is not right in the sight of God” and “thy money perish with thee,” His advise for Simon was to “repent” and “pray.” If Simon had backslidden and there*

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wasn't a way to regain fellowship with God, why was he advised to do something that would have been a waste of time and of no benefit?

1John 5:16 “If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.”

James 5:19-20 “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

Romans 11:22-23 “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.”

Galatians 4:19 “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you...”

Revelation 2:4-5 “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent...”

*Both sides are clearly taught in the scripture. A person can eternally lose their salvation and a person can be restored back to God. God is not the author of confusion. Which doctrinal belief is correct? I believe the answer has to be **both doctrinal beliefs are true.** How can this be possible for both answers to be true?*

To clear up confusion on this subject, we must look a subject that on the surface would seem to be totally contrary to the study, but we will soon see that it plays a critical place in our understanding of this study. In fact, we cannot understand this confusing and seemly contrary subject without first understanding this subject: Church Discipline

Church Discipline:

1. Scriptural Foundation for Church Discipline

- a. The Authority for discipline comes from God and is given to church leaders as identified in the scriptures below.

Ephesians 3:7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

II Timothy 4:1-2 ¹I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; ²Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.

Titus 2:15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

- b. Christians must live in subjection to God-Given authority to be in obedience to God

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Roman 13:1-6 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. ²Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. ³For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: ⁴For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. ⁵Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. ⁶For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

c. Discipline must be based on scripture

II Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2. *Paul's Leadership Example toward the Early Church*

II Corinthians 12:20-21 For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults: ²¹And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

II Corinthians 13:1-2 This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. ²I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare:

I Corinthians 4:21 What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?

II Corinthians 13:10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

3. **Example of Early Church Discipline**

I Corinthians 5:1-7 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. ²And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. ³For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, ⁴In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁵To deliver

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such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? ⁷ Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

II Corinthians 2:6-10 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. ⁷ So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. ⁸ Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him. ⁹ For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things. ¹⁰ To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;

II Corinthians 13:10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.

Study Conclusion:

If someone forfeits their salvation, it is possible for God to use chastisement as a tool on a former Christian to take them through suffering and spiritual “dry places”. Chastisement can be used to make them realize their need to return to God. Therefore, God uses discipline as a rod to restore salvation to former Christians and bring them back to the place that they once held in him. Please remember, New Testament chastisement is never intended to destroy, but its purpose is to restore the backslidden child back into the Body of Christ. Remember the story of the Prodigal Son!