Myth #1 - Once Saved Always Saved

Many Christians believe that once they receive Christ, they will go to heaven when they die no matter how they live here on earth. This myth is one of Satan's greatest lies. As early as the first century, the devil tried to undermine the true gospel of Christ with this heresy. However, in the 16th century the church began to swallow this lie, which now seems to grow with popularity every year. As a result of believing this lie, the church has become compromised and corrupted by the world to the point where it has lost its saltiness and is being overrun by the enemy.

The Root of this Lie

Even though there is no support in the Bible for the myth of "once saved always saved," there are many root causes for its wide acceptance in the church. The primary reason why this lie of Satan has found open ground to grow and strangle the life out of the church is because most of the people who presently go to church are not submitted to Christ's authority. Because Jesus Christ is not their Sovereign Lord, they do not know Him nor do they know His truth. As a result, most churchgoers lack spiritual discernment and do not know the difference between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. In fact, many people who attend church are not even born again of the Spirit. The church is filled with these "tares" or false Christians (many of them also false shepherds) who distort the Scriptures for their own gain and to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16). These hypocrites have leavened the whole church. Furthermore, those who are saved in the church do not know how to overcome sin because they do not know (believe and act on) the whole truth of the gospel of Christ. And because they do not know (believe and act) that they have died with Christ (Romans 6:3-11), they are beset, harassed and defeated by sin. They are like a sick person whose immune system has become so weak and compromised that any disease (or in this case, any lie of the enemy) can take hold of and destroy their body.

Many professing "Christians" are not submitted to Christ's authority because they want to enjoy the pleasures of sin while they are here on earth, yet still believe they will go to heaven when they die. The "once saved always saved" myth provides a religious cover for them to sin and yet not have to worry about the eternal fire of hell. The apostle Peter addressed this evil motive when he wrote, "Act as free men and do not use your freedom *as a covering for evil* but use it as bondslaves for God (1 Peter 2:16)." In their case, the Scripture is true: "They are godless people who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and (by their behavior) deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord (Jude 4)." The "once saved always

saved" teaching falsely gives many disobedient Christians a blank check to sin and a false sense of eternal security. This myth has also "inspired" many people, who are not really true believers in Christ, to falsely "confess" Christ as their Savior as a cheap way to buy "fire insurance" to protect themselves from hell. However, millions of these so-called Christians are going to be shocked and horrified when they find out they gambled away their soul to gain the world. They believed the devil's lie and lost.

Most Christians Do Not Know the Power of the Cross

Another reason for the ready acceptance of this myth is because many Christians are plagued by a deep insecurity about their eternal salvation. There are many Christians who cannot stop practicing sin because they don't know what Christ has accomplished for them on the cross. They don't spiritually know that when Christ died, they also died with Him and their sinful nature was crucified and buried with Christ (Romans 6:1-11). As a result of their spiritual ignorance, they are harassed with besetting sins, which compromise their faith and create nagging doubts about their eternal security. It is very common for these defeated Christians to seek reassurance from their pastors that they will still go to heaven. But since many pastors also don't truly know that they have died with Christ, the only comfort they can give discouraged Christians is that God loves and forgives them and they need not worry about their salvation. Concerning these struggling Christians' failed sanctification, most pastors will counsel them to not give up but just try a little harder (read the Bible more, pray more, go to church more, and get involved in ministry more). They will also superficially comfort them by saying they are not alone in their struggle - everyone else is also in same process; nobody's perfect, we are all just forgiven. In other words, we're all in the same leaky boat together. Can this possibly be the triumphant Christian life we read about in the Bible? No!

This counsel of man is based on defeat and is the "lowest common denominator" standard of holiness, which falls far short of God's standard of holiness as expressed by the Lord Jesus Christ: "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5:48)" and the apostle Peter: "Be holy as the Lord is holy (1 Peter 1:16)." Man's wisdom of "once saved always saved" may be soulishly comforting but it is misleading, ungodly and not Biblical. Since it is not based on the truth of God, it does nothing to inspire true faith in immature Christians. Nor does it provide discouraged believers with practical Biblical teaching so that they might be know how to live a sanctified life in Christ and be sure of their eternal security. As the apostle Peter said, "Therefore, my brothers, *be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure*. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2

Peter 1:10-11)." This sanctified or holy life – "without which no one will see the Lord" - is possible to live because of Christ's death on the cross. According to the gospel, Christ not only died for the forgiveness of our sins; God included us in Christ's death. When Christ was crucified and buried, our sinful nature was also crucified and buried (removed) so that we would no longer be slaves to sin (Romans 6:6-7). Thus Christ's death became our death so that His life might become our life.

God Gives Grace to the Humble But Rejects the Proud

The Father's desire is that all His children who are weak and fainthearted and overcome by sin would see what His Son accomplished for us through His death so that we might walk in "the freedom of the glory of the children of God (Romans 8:21)." Jesus, the Lamb of God, died on the cross so that we might reign in life and overcome sin through Him (Romans 5:17; 8:37; 1 Corinthians 15:57; 2 Corinthians 2:14). Jesus, the Great Shepherd, has great compassion for all God's sheep that are distressed, discouraged and ensnared by sin. There is a difference between how God regards someone who is humble in heart and poor in spirit compared to someone who is selfrighteous and proud in spirit (Luke 18:9-14). Jesus said, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are ill... for I did not come to call the righteous (those who think they need no Savior) but sinners (those who know they need a Savior) (Matthew 9:12-13; Mark 2:17)." God has mercy on those who are bruised by besetting sins and whose light is dim because of spiritual ignorance but who are repentant and want the truth of Christ to deliver them from sin. "A bruised reed He will not break and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish (Matthew 12:20)." But God opposes the proud who willfully and persistently practice lawlessness and who are unrepentant. Because they have rejected God's grace and authority, God will reject them in the Day of Judgment. "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever and the righteous scepter is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness (Hebrews 1:8-9)." Jesus said, "I wish you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of My mouth (Revelation 3:15-16)." This reveals how much the Lord despises and rejects those who are lawless and practicing sin willfully and unrepentantly.

The Bible Strongly Refutes "Once Saved Always Saved"

There are hundreds of Scriptures that refute the "once saved always saved" myth and we will look at just a few. The Bible has two overarching themes or principles that completely contradict this lie. Jesus declared the first principle when He said, "Every good tree bears good fruit... every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire (Matthew 7:17-

19)." John the Baptist also preached this divine principle, "The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire (Matthew 3:10)." In other words, the proof or evidence of our faith is spiritual fruit. If there is no evidence of spiritual fruit in our life, our faith is worthless (James 2:17-26). Jesus expanded on this when He said, "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away... If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned (John 15:2-6)." These are born again Christians (who were in Christ) but they did not abide (remain) in Christ. Consequently, they did not enter into sanctification (separation from sin and separation to God). Since they did not bear the fruit of sanctification, which confirms and seals their faith, they will be cut off at the end of this age and thrown into the fire of hell. The Biblical principle is this: anyone who does not bear spiritual fruit proves themselves unworthy of entering the kingdom of heaven. Someone may ask, "What about a person who dies before they can bear any spiritual fruit, such as the thief on the cross? (Luke 23:39-43)." In these situations, God knows the spiritual condition of every person's heart and whether their saving faith was genuine, so that their heart would have remained true to Jesus Christ and produced His spiritual fruit.

Only Enduring Faith Produces Fruit Leading to Eternal Life

This first Biblical principle (you must bear fruit) leads to the second principle, which also refutes the "once saved always saved" false doctrine. The second Biblical principle is this: only those who have persevering faith will be saved. Jesus addressed this second Biblical principle when He said, "He who endures to the end will be saved (see Matthew 10:22; 24:13; Mark 13:13; Luke 21:19)." Just as we are saved through our faith in Christ and His cross, we must also be sustained through our faith in Christ and His cross. "For in the gospel a righteousness of God is revealed, from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith (Romans 1:17).'" The Bible makes it clear that we need sustaining or enduring faith to be saved. These two Biblical principles are actually two sides to one divine truth: enduring faith produces spiritual fruit without which no one will inherit eternal life. In Jesus' parable of the sower and the seed, two out of three people who received the gospel of the kingdom did not bear any spiritual fruit because they lacked persevering faith (see Luke 8:15). God said, "But My righteous one shall live by faith; and if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of our soul (Hebrew 10:38-39)." Our salvation, therefore, must be based on faith from the beginning to the end. Otherwise, we would end up being "an unbelieving believer," or someone who actually is not a believer at all! This is the divine law: since your soul is saved only by your faith in Christ's grace; your soul can also be lost by your unbelief in Christ's grace. "Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called 'Today,' so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ, *if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end* (Hebrews 3:12-1)."

It's How You Finish the Christian Race that Counts

The "once saved always saved" doctrine falsely claims it is not how you finish the Christian race that counts but only how you begin it. The Bible strongly refutes this myth. "By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you (1 Corinthians 15:2)." As the apostle Peter wrote, "If they have escaped the corruption of this world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them (2 Peter 2:20-21). The Bible indicates the spiritual condition of a person at the end of their life determines what their condition will be throughout eternity. In other words, if a person dies in faith abiding in Christ, they will always be with Christ and they will rise from dead when Jesus Christ returns (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). However, if a person did not die in faith because they had fallen away from the faith and did not hear and obey the voice of Christ, how will they hear and respond to the voice of Jesus Christ on the Day of Resurrection when He returns? Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live (John 5:25)."

Faith Without Works is Dead

It is a serious mistake to continually and willfully practice sin and be unrepentant. Many Christians are doing this and thinking that because they have "received Christ," they will always be right before God and have eternal life despite the way they rebelliously live. Nothing could be further from the truth. The blood of Christ is only effective for those with a humble, repentant heart of faith; it is not effective for those who claim to have faith but do not prove it by their actions. John the Baptist warned, "Produce fruit in keeping with repentance (Matthew 3:8)." And the apostle James wrote, "What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has not deeds? Can that faith save him? ... Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead (James 2:14, 17)." The apostle Paul taught, "Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that *those who practice those things will not inherit the kingdom of God* (Galatians 5:19-21). God declares, "If I tell the righteous man that he will surely live, but then he trusts in his righteousness and does evil, none of the righteous things he has done will be remembered; he will die for the evil he has done (Ezekiel 33:13)." The Bible says those who endure to the end will be saved. Those who endure to the end are the overcoming bride whom God will join together with Jesus Christ in eternal companionship at the end of this age.

Only Those Who Do the Will of the Father Will Enter In

Jesus Christ knew the lie of "once saved always saved" would try to creep into His church; therefore, He directly confronted it before He ascended to heaven. Jesus told His disciples that, in the Day of Judgment, He would reject all those who pretended to profess faith in Him and called Him Lord but whom willfully and unrepentantly practiced sin. "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness (Matthew 7:21-23)." Jesus intentionally used the example of Christians who ministered in the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit to illustrate this point. The disciples knew from their personal experience and observation that anyone who performed genuine miracles in the name of Jesus Christ was a professed follower of Christ (Mark 9:38-40). But Jesus told them that He would not allow anyone into heaven who willfully and persistently practiced sin, even if they did perform miracles and confess Him as Lord and Savior! "Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say? (Luke 6:46)." The Bible speaks with great clarity on this issue: to know Christ is to obey Him; if you do not obey Christ, you do not know Him. On another occasion, Jesus said, "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks and those who commit lawlessness, and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 13:41-42)." This is the case of lawless Christians who "have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame

(Hebrews 6:4-6)." In the end, God warns they will be burned (Hebrews 6:8). What a warning this is to all of us!

The author of Hebrews continues, "For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving a knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he has been sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' and again, 'The Lord will judge His people.' It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Hebrews 10:26-31)." These are not sinners who have never been saved; these are born again Christians who lose their salvation because they keep willfully practicing lawlessness. The author of Hebrews states, "He (Jesus) became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9)." Once again, this is the spiritual lesson: to know Christ is to obey Him; if you do not obey Him, you do not know Him. And those who do not know Him will not inherit eternal life. The apostle Paul warned Christians they must live sanctified, obedient lives to the Lord: "If you live according to the flesh you must die, but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live (Romans 8:13)."

Jesus Will Erase Their Names From the Book of Life

In the Book of Revelation, the Lord Jesus Christ warned Christians who have willfully and persistently practiced sin and "soiled their garments," that unless they repent, He will erase their names from the Book of Life (Revelation 3:5). These are born again believers whose names were recorded in the Book of Life but who will lose their salvation if they don't repent from practicing sin and begin to walk in Christ's sanctification. "But among you there must not even be a hint of sexual immorality, or any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people... For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person – such a man is an idolater – has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes upon those who are disobedient (Ephesians 5:3-6)."

The Bible describes the actual case of a Christian who will lose his salvation if he does not repent from practicing immorality. This is the case of the Christian in the Corinthian church who was having sexual relations with his stepmother. The apostle Paul wrote, "I have decided to deliver this man over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh so that his spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 5:5)." Paul's hope was that without God's protective hedge around him, this Christian would be buffeted by the devil in his soul and body until he repented of his immorality and turned back to following Christ in sanctification so that his spirit might be saved. Jesus Christ made it very clear in teaching His disciples that anyone who continued to practice sin would not enter the kingdom of heaven. Jesus said, "If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell (Mark 9:43-47)."

God's Divine Heart Transplant Saves Us From Sin

In this passage, we know Jesus was not instructing His disciples to mutilate their physical bodies to stop sinning. Jesus knew that cutting off your arm or plucking out your eye could not possibly stop you from sinning. By this parable, Jesus declared the only way to be saved and enter the kingdom of God was to radically deal with sin. Jesus had earlier told His disciples, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, and adulteries, deeds of coveting, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man (Mark 7:21-23)." Since the only way to stop us from practicing sin would be to remove our sinful heart, this is precisely what God the Father did. God used the death of His only Son to perform a divine heart transplant. When Christ died, God exchanged our terminally sinful heart with His Son's divine holy heart. Now that we have Christ's new heart within us, we don't have to keep sinning because by His death, Jesus once and forever dealt with the "sin factory" that was within us, that "old man of sin." When we "carry our own cross" daily as Christ's disciples, we affirm by faith that by the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ we have been crucified to the world (Romans 6:3-11; Galatians 2:20; 6:14)." In this way, the members of our body are "cut off" from sin and we become conformed to Christ's death (Philippines 3:10).

Jesus Will Not Marry a Harlot

Some Christians naively think that once you are under the New Covenant, God would never break His covenant with you. The truth is that God will never break His covenant with you unless you first break covenant with Him. Jesus said a spouse who is unfaithful and practices adultery is guilty of breaking the marriage covenant and can be divorced according to God's Law. In fact, when the nation of Israel practiced spiritual adultery and broke their covenant with Him, God gave them a certificate of divorce (Jeremiah 3:8; also 11:10). In the same way, when Christians prove themselves unfaithful and guilty of breaking their covenant with Jesus their Bridegroom, God will give them a certificate of divorce rather than have His Son marry a harlot. The Bible says, "God keeps His covenant with those who love Him and obey Him (Daniel 9:4)." Some Christians mistakenly think that once you become a child of God, you are guaranteed your spiritual inheritance, including the security of eternal life. However, even in the natural, if a child grossly dishonors and shames his father, he can be disinherited from his father's will. In the same way, if a child of God repeatedly dishonors and shames His heavenly Father by willfully and persistently practicing sin, he proves himself unworthy of eternal life and can be disinherited from the New Covenant. The Bible says, "If we disown Him, He will also disown us (2 Timothy 2:12)."

Other Christians quote 1 Corinthians 3:15 to argue that we can be saved yet as through fire. However, this verse does not address God's judgment of a Christian's sanctification to Christ; it only addresses God' judgment of a Christian's service to Christ. Paul teaches here that any ministry work, which is not based on the sure foundation of Jesus Christ and is not a product of God's initiative and power, will not stand the test of God's approval. That Christian will still be saved but he will receive no reward for his self-inspired, self-accomplished ministry. This particular Scripture does not have anything to do with God's judgment of a Christian who willfully practices lawlessness and who will lose his salvation if he does not repent. Some Christians also think that at the end of the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13); the bridegroom (Jesus Christ) should open the door for the five foolish virgins to also join the wedding feast. This is presumptuous and wrong! Jesus concludes the parable of the ten virgins by saying the bridegroom will not let the foolish virgins into the wedding feast! Instead, the bridegroom tells them, "I do not know you." This is the very same judgment Jesus pronounced in Matthew 7:23 when He said He would not allow Christians who practice lawlessness into the kingdom of heaven. The five foolish virgins are those Christians who received the Holy Spirit when they were saved but then persistently quenched the Holy Spirit from filling them by not obeying Him, even though Christ's death on the cross made it possible for them to obey Him. Once again, we see God's divine law: to know Christ is to obey Him! Because they did not obey Him, God will not allow them to wed His Son at the wedding feast of the Lamb!

The Worthless Slave is Cast into Hell

Some Christians think the parable of the worthless slave who made no use of the one talent his master gave him is a picture of a Christian who will get no heavenly reward but will still get into heaven (Matthew 25:14-30). Once again, this is presumptuous and wrong. At the end of this parable, Jesus said the worthless slave not only had his one talent taken away from him but he was then thrown into outer darkness where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth." Jesus called this slave wicked and lazy. The worthless slave is a picture of a Christian who made no use of the seed (the word) of the kingdom that His Master, Jesus Christ, deposited in him. Therefore, this person bore no spiritual fruit. At the end of this age, this deposit of Christ's seed will be taken away from him and he will then be cast into hell (see also Matthew 25:40 for a continuation of this theme in Jesus' third parable in this series). Jesus' parable of the worthless slave has the same lesson as His parable of the worthless salt. "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men (Matthew 5:13)." By this parable, we see the Lord's judgment is that those Christians who have lost their saltiness or sanctification are no longer good for anything except to be thrown out of the kingdom of heaven.

You Can Take Yourself Out of God's Hand

Some Christians also foolishly argue that since Jesus said no one could take them out of His hand (John 10:28), they are guaranteed eternal life. However, God will never violate your free will. Although no one else can take you out of Jesus' hand, you can take yourself out of His hand through your own unbelief and disobedience. Others mistakenly argue that "eternal" life means that you are "eternally" guaranteed a ticket to heaven. However, this is not the correct interpretation of the word "eternal," which is used to describe the nature of God's divine zoe life given to every born again believer. Just as God gave us divine zoe life, He can also take zoe life away if we prove unfaithful and unworthy of His kingdom. And finally, some Christians ignorantly and foolishly say it is physically impossible for God to make you spiritually unborn once you have been born again of the Spirit. However, if God could do a miracle to make you born again and a member of His family, it is also possible for Him to also remove His Holy Spirit from you so that you no longer belong to His family. "You say then, 'Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.' Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off (Romans 11:19-22)." The apostle James wrote of these Christians who had fallen away from the faith, "My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back,

remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will *save him from death* and cover a multitude of sins (James 5:19)."

In closing, we believe God sees a vast difference between a Christian with a repentant heart and one with a rebellious heart. God, who knows the secret motives and attitudes of men's hearts, will judge each person justly and accordingly. "(God) is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart... all things are open and laid bare to His eyes (Hebrews 4:12-13) ... on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus (Acts 2:16)." The sins of some who profess to be Christians are obvious, whereas others' sins are hidden and will be revealed in the Day of Judgment. Therefore, since only God can discern the hidden secrets of our hearts, the outcome of each person's eternal destiny is not always evident while they are living here on earth. For example, if a Christian with a humble and repentant spirit dies while he is still struggling with besetting sins or he only bears a little fruit because of his spiritual ignorance and immaturity, we believe (based on the totality of the Scriptures) that God in His mercy will grant that person eternal life. On the other hand, if a Christian with a rebellious and unrepentant spirit dies while he is willfully and persistently practicing sin and he bears no spiritual fruit, we believe that person will not inherit eternal life because they have proven themselves lawless and disqualified themselves from inheriting the kingdom of God. Consequently, we believe the only way anyone can confidently know that their election and salvation is secure is if they walk by faith in Christ's sanctification, which was made possible by Christ's death on the cross on our behalf. Our sanctification (our obedience) to Christ is the proof and seal of our saving faith in Christ. Considering all that the Bible teaches on the need for persevering faith and sanctification, why would any Christian want to walk a tightrope of disobedience and be so dangerously close to falling into the abyss of eternal separation from God? The Bible warns us, "Without holiness no one will see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14)."

Once Saved Always Saved is Always Wrong

Once saved always saved is always wrong! Some ministers teach that disobedient and lawless Christians can look forward to being in heaven along side every obedient Christian who laid down their life for Christ. They teach that the only difference is those who are unbelieving and rebellious won't receive the same heavenly reward as those righteous saints who obeyed Christ. Those who teach others to believe this gross lie will face an even stricter judgment from the Lord. The Bible rejects this heresy and declares the only thing rebellious and lawless Christians have to look forward to after they die is the terror of being judged by a wrathful God. Jesus said, "Do not fear those who can kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matthew 10:28)."

Since we have died with Christ, we have been freed from sin and enslaved to God (Romans 6:6-7). The apostle Paul taught that if we submit to Christ's authority and obey His commands, we will bear the fruit of sanctification and receive the reward of our obedience, which is our inheritance - eternal life (Romans 6:22). Jesus Himself told Paul that those who are *sanctified by* faith in Him would receive their eternal inheritance (Acts 26:18). Jesus also said, "Whoever has My commands and *obeys them*, he is the one who loves Me. He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I too will love him and show Myself to him... if anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him (John 14:21; 23)." The only way you can be sure of your salvation is if you believe you have died with Christ and trust and obey Him so He sovereignly lives in you. As the apostle Paul testified, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me; and the life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God (Galatians 2:20)." This is God's sanctified life in Christ, the outcome of which is eternal life. Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word, he will never see death (John 8:51)."

In the Garden of Eden, the devil's original lie to man was, "You surely will not die" if you partake and eat of the forbidden fruit (Genesis 3:4). Adam and Eve both swallowed Satan's lie and died for their sin. Millions of Christians today still believe the devil's lie that they too will surely not die if they partake of the world. However, the Bible says, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him... The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever (1 John 2:15-17)." Unless Christians who willfully and persistently practice sin repent from loving the world, many of them will face the just wrath of God and perish in their sins. "Now I desire to remind you... that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe (Jude 5)." In view of our grave concern and compassion for all Christians who are overcome by sin and whose souls could be forever lost, our prayer to God is that they would repent and turn back in faith to the true gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who died for us and included us in His death so He might sovereignly live in us. Repenting and believing in the true and eternal gospel of Christ is always the way of deliverance for anyone who is walking in unbelief and disobedience and sincerely wants to come under Christ's Sovereignty!

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