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SALVATION

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world- he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.."* [Acts 16:31a](#) And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving

your sins and saving you! *“That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”* Romans 10:9,10 *“For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”* Romans 10:13 *“Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Romans 5:1

Eternal Security

Intro:

Basically the doctrine of eternal security is that once saved, always saved. That is, once anyone places their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior they are saved forevermore. There is no one and no thing that can ever separate them from God, not even their own sins that they might commit after their salvation.

There, probably, are around two to three hundred passages in the NT alone that clearly teach that the believer's salvation is clear, complete, final and permanent, and around two to three others that seem, on the surface, to teach otherwise. In our study we will look at a few of the passages that clearly show that we have been permanently and eternally saved at the very moment we believed on Christ, and we will look at a couple of the problem ones as well and see that they do not teach that we can lose our salvation.

Biblical Christians, that is, those believers who are being taught the Word of God, know that the Bible teaches that their salvation is secure and permanent in Christ. But there are many other Christians, who are not exposed to sound doctrine, feel, often with great fear, that there is something they can do, some sin they can commit, that will separate them from Christ. Obviously they are ignorant of the mountain of Biblical exegesis concerning the matter, or out of their pride reject it when they get it. One must also be cognizant of the fact that it takes Doctrine to grow in grace as a Christian, and that doctrine is built upon doctrine. If a believer rejects a doctrine, especially a key doctrine, then that believer's growth will stop. The doctrine of eternal security is one of those pivotal doctrines for our growth in grace. You see, we're saved by grace and kept saved by grace. To reject that means that the believer thinks that he or she must do something to keep themselves saved. This is a departure from grace to works.

In our study we will not only examine the words and what they mean, but we will also look at the grammar and see that it clearly shows that our salvation is complete, final and eternal. That there is nothing that can be added to it and nothing will be taken away from it. Remember that in concluding a doctrine all we need to have is one passage that clearly shows something to be true. If we have two or three that serve as witnesses, then so much the better. But if we have two to three hundred, well you get the point! In the face of such evidence, if there are two to three other passages that seem to indicate the other

possibility; passages that are on the surface ambiguous as to their meaning and are used to contradict the mountain of evidence, then we must reject them as to the conclusion that people are trying to ascribe to them.

A. Given to Christ by the Father

“All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.” John 6:37

1. *“All that the Father gives me will come to me” - pan ho didosi moi ho pater pros eme hexei*

The first thing we need to notice is the order of first cause. You see a ball rolling down the street, that's the effect, but what was the cause? It didn't get up and roll on its own; something had to cause it roll down the street. Maybe a child threw it, or the wind blew it, but it did not do it on its own.

So the question is, “How is it that we came to Christ in the first place?” Did we do it on our own? Did we one day decide to come to Christ, or was it God who brought us to Christ? In this passage we see that we were given to Christ by God the Father, so it is God who is the first cause in all this.

We will see that it was God who is the active agent in our salvation, not ourselves, in every aspect of it from the crucifixion of Christ to our being brought to Christ, being saved by Christ, all the way to being kept by Christ guaranteeing our eternal salvation, all in grace and nothing out of our works!

The Father gives us to Christ, how clear that is! Can we not hear it! Can we not believe it! He gave us to Christ as a gift; we didn't deserve it, but he did nevertheless. The word for give is *didomi* and it does mean to give as a gift, but whenever things of this magnitude are conducted by a ruler it has the idea of a legal grant. Once again, over and over throughout the Scriptures we see that our salvation is above all things a legal salvation, just as our eternal inheritance is a legal inheritance.

The word for all, *pas*, is not the word for every single individual. It is the word for all as a group or whole. A group of people from the world have been given to Christ as a gift from the Father to him. And the basis for this group being given to Christ by the Father lies not in anything that the group has done, nothing of their own merit, works, or worth, but the basis lies solely with the grace and purpose of the Father.

Then it goes on to say that they **will come**, not that they **might come**, or that they have the **potential of coming** to Christ, or that there is the **possibility of coming** to Christ, but that **they will come!** The word *will come* is the future active indicative of *erchomai*, and the future indicative stresses the sense of absolute certainty of an action! Do we hear what that says? They will absolutely come to Christ! Why? Because God did not leave this up to us, with all our weaknesses, but up to his grace and power!

People who reject the doctrine of eternal security, not only are either ignorant of the doctrine or reject it all together, have their eyes on the wrong person. They are looking to themselves and not at God! They are driven by their own works, that there is something that they have to do, instead of looking to God and what he does. Works-oriented believers look to themselves, while grace-oriented believers look to God.

2. “*And he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out*”- *kai ton erchomenon pros me ou me ekbalo exo.*

“*The one coming to me*” is in the present active participle to bring our attention to the single individual out of this group that is coming to Christ for salvation, to emphasize that **no one is left out**. Our attention is brought down to the single, solitary soul as he comes to Christ for the forgiveness of his sins.

Now we ask the question, “Why is it that he is coming to Christ?” Is he coming to Christ of his own accord, or is there something else going on here?” The answer lies in the connective kai at the beginning of this clause where it says, “*All that the Father is giving to me will come to me, and the one that is coming to me I will in no wise cast out.*” *Kai, and, connects the second clause to the first one.* The ones the Father is giving to Christ **are** coming to Christ as their Savior! **They are coming to Christ as their Savior because the Father has given them to Christ!**

Now we have this picture of a steady stream of people coming to Christ for salvation, and we then need to turn our attention to the Lord. **What is his attitude toward them and what is he going to do with them after they have come to him?** The passage says that he will in “*no wise cast them out*”! The word in the original is *ekballo* and it means to throw out, to cast out, or in the English today to reject.

It is found in the orist active subjunctive, which when coupled with *ou* and *me*, two words for no, becomes an emphatic subjunctive. *Me* is one of the words for no, and it means no, but sometimes it could mean yes later on. If you wanted to say no absolutely, that the answer would be **never**, then you would use the more emphatic *ou*. **But if you wanted to emphasize that something would never under any conditions happen, then you would combine the two together, as we have here with *ou me*.** So what this is saying is **that absolutely, not never, under any conditions whatsoever would Christ ever reject those who are coming to him for salvation!**

Now if Christ will not reject anyone, under any condition whatsoever, that comes to him for salvation, when they are at their lowest, their most hateful, when they are sinners of the worse kind, then why in the world would Christ reject a beloved of the Father when he is righteous! Under a fortiori reasoning, **if he does not reject men and women who have a legal standing of Sinner, then why would he reject one who has a legal standing of Righteous? It doesn't make sense, because it isn't true.**

B. Guaranteed by the Will of the Father

“For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:38-40.

What a passage, if we will believe it! If we will allow ourselves to believe the simple truth that is stated so clearly. **The eternal security of the believer in Christ is guaranteed by the will of the Father and by the agency of Jesus Christ!** What ignorance, what arrogance, what delusion for any believer to think that their security is kept by their own works, by their own pitiful strength. Do we honestly think that God would leave the importance of such a matter in our hands! From beginning to end, from our being called by God to standing before him in resurrected glory is all the work of God, all of the grace of God, and all for the glory of God.

Christ said it, oh so clearly, I have come down from heaven to do the will of the Father. **Then he goes on to tell us exactly what the Father’s will is, that he would lose not one of them but raise them up on the last day!** He was sent here to earth for the purpose of doing the will of his Father. And it was the will of his Father that these people that he gave to Christ would be saved, resurrected and be with them in eternity!

He uses the word all again in describing these people; the same word in v.37 where he says, *“all that the Father gives to me will come to me”*. It is the same *“all”* that he has given to Christ that he will lose not one of them. There is a number of people that will believe on Christ as their Savior, and whatever that number is it makes up a group. And out of that group of people that the Father gives to his Son, **not one of them will be lost!**

And they will be raised at the last day. This looks forward to our resurrection when we will be given resurrected, perfect, eternal bodies. The active agent is this is Jesus Christ; it is he who will raise us from the dead. And why? It will all be in accordance with the Father’s will and plan.

Then he says, *“Everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life”!* Do we not hear what the words say, *“shall have eternal life”*, *“shall raise him up”*, does he say **might** have eternal life? Is there anywhere in all this that we see the idea of “iffiness”? *Shall, will*, all speak of **absolute certainty**, and when it comes to God doing something then you can be sure there is absolute certainty.

When did it ever creep into our minds that sin could separate us eternally from God? When did we ever begin to think that there is some sin that we could commit that would lose us our salvation? We did not get saved by stopping sinning, for sin had nothing to do with our salvation. The only issue in salvation is faith in Christ, not sin!

C. Eternity is Already Ours

“I tell you the truth, he who believes has eternal life.” John 6:47

How clear Christ makes it in this passage. “*Amen, Amen I say to you*”, *amen, amen lego humin*. The *amen* formula goes way back to OT usage, for by the saying of, “*amen*”, it meant that the individual was stating something to be true, taking his stand on it, even basing his life on it. By the use of duplication it is a very strong emphasis, much stronger than merely saying truly. So true is this, so strong a conviction does Christ have in what he is about to say that he is personally placing himself and his reputation on it.

“*He who believes*”, or, “*The one who believes*”, and who are these believing ones? The ones who have come to him; the ones that the Father has given to him; the ones that he will never reject! And what is the statement that he has to make about them? That **they have eternal life!** Not that they **might have** eternal life, not that there is the **possibility** of eternal life, not that they **will** have eternal life, but that **they already have it!**

The word have, *echo*, is in the present indicative and it states, first of all, the reality of it. **Reality and potentiality are not the same. Potentiality** means that you don't have something, but you could have it, that there is the possibility of it. That is not **reality**, and that's not the case here. The indicative mood states the reality of it, that **we really do have eternal life**, and the present tense tells us that **we have it right now!**

So, the ones that the Father is giving to the Son are coming to the Son. And the ones coming to the Son are believing on the Son. And the ones believing on the Son have eternal life at the same moment that they are believing on the Son! The word *echo* means to possess something has one's own. **All believers in Christ possess eternity the very moment they believe on Christ as their Savior.**

D. Faith in the Word

“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.” 1 John 5:13

John is writing a note that is directed to one specific group of people on earth, those who have believed on Jesus Christ as their Savior, even those who have believed in his name. There is something important that he wants us to know. He wants us to know that we have eternal life, and that we possess it right now. Not that we might have it one day if we're good little boys or girls, or if we jump through enough hoops, or if we hold on to the end, or something else that some person or false teacher may tell us, but that **we already possess it by virtue of our faith in Christ!**

Hina plus the subjunctive is used here to denote purpose; the purpose of his letter is so that we will know that we have eternal life. Not that we will think we do, or hope we do, or guess we do, but that we will **know** that we do! The word for know here is *oida* and it meant to have a full and complete knowledge on a given subject or doctrine. The doctrine **in view is eternal security and John is giving them the teaching that they need to complete their knowledge and their faith in the matter.**

In the perfect tense, it tells us that this knowledge began at a point in time; there were

other teachings added to it, then it came to a completed state, with existing results. It tells us that they had learned many things about Christ's finished work, the Father's plan and will, and a host of other things, but his letter here would complete their knowledge in the matter. Completed knowledge, completed faith all add up to confidence without fear.

And again we have the word *echo* telling us that we have this eternal life as our very own possession and we have it **now!** There are many passages in the Bible that tell us that we have eternal life the moment we believe, not that there is the possibility to get it if we somehow do all these things others tell us to do, sort of like “holding a carrot on a stick out before us”, but that we have it now!

Take for instance the three forms of life that all true believers in Christ possess. **One**, we have biological life, something that every single living thing possesses. **Two**, we have soul life, something that every living human being possesses. And **three**, we have spiritual life, something that only believers in Christ possess!

Biological life stops at physical death. When plants, animals and man die there is no biological life in their form. But, in the case of man, man lives beyond physical death because he possesses soul life, but then there is the second death. But in the case of regenerated man, the Christian, he lives past the second death because he has spiritual life. You see, **spiritual life cannot die because it is eternal, and this life is found in the new nature that was created in us by God!**

When God regenerated the believer he created in him a new man; the very essence of this new man is spiritual, and because he created this new man in his own image it is eternal! How then can one say that they are not eternally secure! Their very essence now as a believer in Christ is eternal by virtue of the new birth!

E. Declared Righteous

“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1

This is the verse that started off the Protestant Reformation. The teachings of the Roman church said that man could never be sure that he had eternity, that he must submit to the pope in Rome and the sacraments of the church to be saved, and even then he could never be sure. And he probably would have to spend some time in Purgatory to cleanse him from his remaining sins. (A time which could be shortened by donations to the church).

What torment this was for those who had truly believed on Christ! Never knowing for sure that they would be with the lover of their souls. Never knowing if they had done enough, or if there was something else to do. What bondage, what fear, what torment of the soul! But when Martin Luther finally saw and believed what God had said about the situation his heart finally had relief!

To *justify* is *dikaioo*, but it is found in the form *dikaiothentes*, which is the arist passive participle. Now, to begin with the word means **to declare someone to be righteous**. It's a

word that would be found in a court of law where the accused would be standing before a judge, who was ready to make his pronouncement. His pronouncement is his verdict of being guilty or innocent. When he states it that is his declaration. What we have is the **believer in Christ standing before the judgment bar of God and God making a legal declaration concerning him. What is his declaration? That he is righteous!**

The passive voice is used when the subject, us, receives the action of the verb. We cannot make ourselves righteous, nor can we declare ourselves to be righteous. Only God can do that and he does it for every believer in Christ at the time of their faith in Christ!

The action of the aorist participle precedes the action of the main verb. **The action of being declared righteous precedes the action of having peace with God.** You see, we are already righteous in the eyes of God, and we already have peace with him. There is not one passage whatsoever that states that we can lose our legal standing of being righteous before God. Remember, the term “Sinner” is a legal classification of fallen man's legal standing before God, while the term “Righteous” is also a legal classification of saved man's standing before God.

The passage should be better translated, “*Having been justified*”, to bring out the idea of the aorist passive participle more accurately. We have been justified in the past when we placed our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior, with the result that we still are justified and will remain justified forever! And we notice **it is through faith!** The original has it as, *ek pisteos*, which means out of the source of faith. And, as we know, **faith must always have an object**, and the object of biblical faith is Jesus Christ. So, through simple faith alone in Jesus Christ alone we are declared righteous by God. An act that occurred sometime in the past, and an act that was **permanent**.

The he goes on to say that, “*We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*”. We may not always experience the peace of God in our own lives, but we are at peace with God and this is the most important. You see, we were the enemies of God in our unsaved state prior to our faith in Christ. We were standing there necks bowed, our hearts filled with hate, shaking our fists and railing against him, but now we are at peace with him. And again we have the word *echo* used for “*have*” to tell us that we now possess this, it is ours; we have peace with God. We are in the state of peace with God now, because we had been justified by God at some point in time in the past.

F. Faith Counted As Righteousness

“However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.” Romans 4:5

In the eyes of God faith is counted as righteousness; it isn't righteousness, but is viewed by God as righteousness. The word here for *credited*, or counted, *logizomai*, is the thinking of an accountant or bookkeeper, as he goes over his accounts. And **it describes the way God looks at us when he considers this matter of salvation in regards to his righteousness and our need of it.**

Perhaps the easiest way to describe it is as this. We all have seen, and probably used, those \$2 off coupons found in the newspapers for the grocery store. Now they aren't \$2, but the grocery store views them as \$2, and they can do that because it's their store! So at the end of the month, when all the sales receipts and cash come to the accountant, he sees that there was \$100,000 in gross receipts, but there was only \$82,000 in actual cash. Not a problem, because when he goes over the coupons, he sees that there was also \$18,000 in the store's coupons, so his books balance.

Or, we can take a story, which is not Biblical, but one that everybody is familiar with, about St. Peter at the pearly gates, over which is written, "Only the righteous may enter". And out in front there is a long line of people waiting to get in. A man comes forward and Peter asks him, "Are you righteous? Because if you aren't, you can't come in!" The man replies, "I don't know about that, but when I was down on earth I got this piece of paper and the fellow that gave it to me said that this was all that I would need! Peter asks to look at it and on the piece of paper is written, "**Faith in Jesus Christ**"! Peter joyfully responds, "Come on in for that is counted as righteousness here!"

Righteousness is not faith and faith is not righteousness, they are both different concepts, but God considers faith in Christ as righteousness! And when he sees that faith he declares that individual to be righteous before him. How can he do this? Because when someone believes on Christ as his Savior, thereby legally identifying himself with Christ, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to him. God then **declares him to be righteous** in his heavenly court. **Now, if God justifies the wicked, why wouldn't he keep justified the righteous?**

G. God Made Us Alive

"(God) Made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions- it is by grace you have been saved." Ephesians 2:5

"When we were dead" is the present participle of eimi, the verb of status quo, which defines the nature of our existence at the time of our salvation- we were dead, spiritually speaking. Now when we look at the matter of physical death, we know that there isn't anything one can do about their situation when one is dead. And the same thing goes in the area of spiritual death; there is nothing that anyone can do about making themselves come back to life. If they are ever going to live spiritually, then someone, (God), outside of themselves must do it.

"Made us alive together with Christ" is the orist active indicative of suzopoieo. Now let's take a look at a little grammar. When the active voice is used it means that the subject is producing the action of the verb. When the passive voice is used it means that the subject is receiving the action of the verb. When it comes to the matter of salvation and **God** is the subject, you will find that the active voice is always used, telling us that **God is the one who is doing all the work**. When the subject is **man** you will find that it is always in the passive voice, telling us that **man is receiving the action of salvation**.

Here we find that it is **God who has made us alive** together with Christ. In fact, you will find that **God is the active agent all the way through this in every area**: God loved us; God made us come to life; God raised us up; God seated us in heaven; it is by grace (God's) that you have been saved; we are God's workmanship; created by Christ Jesus; and God prepared the good works he wants us to do.

So where do you find that we had any part in this? We didn't! And if we didn't have any part in this, **how can we have any part in undoing this?** We can't! **How can we do what only God can do? And how can we undo what God has done?** We can't! Our eternal security lies solely in the hand of God, not ours, and he has already given it to us!

H. Saved By Grace

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God- not by works, so that no one can boast.” Ephesians 2:8,9

“For”, *gar*, is used to denote the cause of something; the reason why something has occurred. Now the subject of the whole passage is the salvation of the individual, and the question is **how did this come about?** How does one get saved? Is it something that they do, or is there another reason for it? “For” answers that question. **For it is by grace that we have been saved.**

When comparing a true Christian to those who practice a religion, the religionist will always point to their religion, their temple, or mosque, or their good deeds, or something about themselves that, somehow, puts them in a good standing, hopefully, with their deity. But the true Christian looks to none of these things; he only looks to Christ as the reason why he is saved. And in that he knows that he has been saved by grace. He may not know all there is to know about it, but he knows that his forgiveness and salvation is due solely to the grace of God.

The word “*grace*”, *charis*, speaks of the favor of God. It is a gift from God; it cannot be worked for; one does not merit it and it cannot be earned. It is a gift, now if it is a gift, one does not have to do anything to keep it! **Our eternal salvation is eternally secure, because God has given it to us as a gift.** The character of grace is wrapped up solely in the one who is giving the grace, not in the one who is receiving it; who receives it and keeps it, not by his works or merit, but because of the grace of God.

Then he goes on to write, “*You have been saved*”, using *sozo* in the perfect passive participle, which is the most permanent construction that you can have. The perfect tense looks at an action that took place in the past that came into a state of being with results that continue on into the future! Whenever it was that we believed on Christ we were saved, with the result that we remained saved the next day, the next year, and so on and so on, all the way into eternity. The passive voice, once again, tells us that we have received our salvation; God saved us. We didn't do anything to get it; there were no works or activity on our part, God just saved us; and we simply received the action. And the

participle tells us that this is our new state of existence.

Then he goes on to tell us that God's grace in permanently saving us was through *faith, dia pisteos*, which is in the feminine genitive singular. *Dia* plus the genitive tells us that an action takes place through an instrumental agency, or it is the medium through which an action passes before its accomplishment. Now if *dia* was used with the accusative case, it would tell us that something happened because of something else, or that something was the reason for something else happening.

Now all this may not seem very important to you, but it is in regards to our salvation and the matter of faith. We would have on the one hand that we are saved because of our faith, or on account of our faith, or that our faith saved us. But with the genitive it tells us that we were saved through our faith, that is, **faith was the medium through which God's grace saved us!** See the point!

The action of salvation originates in God, and God saves the individual, not because of his faith, but through his faith. And remember, faith is believing, but it really takes on the tone of trusting, or depending. You're in a severe automobile accident; you're bleeding to death. It's altogether different to **believe** that the doctor can save your life, than it is to **trust** him to do it as you go under the knife. "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved*", means to **put your full and total trust in Christ and Christ alone to save you!**

"*And that not of yourselves*" has been talked about by many. Does it refer to just salvation, faith, or the whole concept? Whatever it is, it definitely does not find its origin in man. Obviously we know that **salvation** does not find its origin in man, but God. And the same thing would go for **grace**, and these two have already been discussed! So the only thing that is left would be the matter of **faith**.

Now those of the free will camp think that all men have the type of faith that is necessary to be saved. **But the Bible teaches that the faith necessary to be saved comes not from man, but from God!** "*Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.*" Romans 10:17. It is totally compatible with grace for God to provide for us the faith necessary to be saved. As the unbeliever hears the words teaching them about the person and work of Christ, they receive the faith necessary for them to trust Christ as their Savior.

"*It is the gift of God, not of works, so that no one can boast.*" Once again we see that our salvation comes to us from God and not because of anything we have done. **If we didn't do anything to get our salvation, if God has done all the work on our behalf in his grace, then how can we lose our salvation by something we do?**

I. Sealed By The Holy Spirit

“And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession- to the praise of his glory.” Ephesians 1:13,14

In this verse there are three verbs and the grammar points out the relationship they have with each other in their order of event. The first verb we see is that *they heard the word of truth, the gospel of their salvation.*

But perhaps, we should begin with the first statement, “*And you also were included in Christ*”. This is a reference to the Gentiles being brought into the Church now becoming the people of God along with the saved Israelites. Christ's work on the cross tore down the wall of partition that separated the two. **We now, both saved Jews and saved Gentiles, are one new man as the people of God.**

But getting back to the verbs, the first one is to *hear*, the second one to *believe* and the third one was to be *sealed*. The first two are in the aoist participle and the third one is in the aoist passive indicative. The action of the aoist participle precedes the action of the main verb, which is to *seal* here.

So we have **these people hearing the gospel first, secondly they believe the gospel, and then they are sealed by the Holy Spirit.** And we could translate this as, “*In whom also you, after having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise.*”

So what does this tell us? **It tells us that when we heard the gospel of Christ and believed it; we were at that very moment sealed by the Holy Spirit.** The sealing of the Holy Spirit took place right then and there and **was a permanent thing.** The indicative mood brings out the reality of the whole matter; it really happened! And if one has been sealed by the Holy Spirit; the very power of God; the dynamic which God created the entire universe, **then there is no power anywhere, man or angel, that can undo what he has done!**

So what is the significance of sealing? Sealing signified ownership, possession, authentication, authority and security or protection. There were various ways of sealing, but the most common in commerce was with the use of wax and a signet ring, where the seal was imprinted on soft wax.

Let's take the example of clay jars. Now one can could store food in them, olive oil, wine, or something else like deeds or other legal devices. The item would be placed in a jar; the lid was put on top of it; soft wax was put around the place where the two met, then one would make an imprint with his signet ring. In the case of deeds and witnesses, the deed was placed in a jar; the wax put around it, then each witness would put the impression of his signet ring on it. If the jar was to ever be opened up in a court over some legal matter, all the witnesses with their signet rings had to be present for its opening.

The seal authenticated that that jar and its contents were the possession of the man

who placed his seal on it. It said that he alone owned it, and that he alone had **authority over it.** It also served as **a security device to protect the contents** from things that one did not want to get into it. It also served to keep the things that were inside- inside! Obviously, if there were things such as food, oil, wine, etc., in there, one would want to keep them in there and to keep everything that is on the outside out. The sealing accomplished that.

How it was frequently used was, let's say a man is coming through town on business or pleasure. He stops by in a shop and sees an item that he wants for himself. He purchases the item, but does not want to take it with him at that moment for he has other things that he wants to do. So he pays the price for the item; the item is placed in a clay jar; wax is affixed to the jar and its lid, thus sealing it; he imprints his seal on it, thus signifying that he is the owner; and then the jar is placed up on a shelf waiting for him when he returns to get it, which is the day of redemption.

Can we not see ourselves in all this? Christ came by the Slave Market of Sin and purchased for himself slaves off the auction block. He affixed his seal on us, (none other than the Holy Spirit and try to break that seal), and is coming back to pick up that which he has purchased with his own blood! The sealing protects the contents of the new man inside from ever changing, in a bad sense; and it protects the new man on the inside from having demons from ever being able to enter in. A demon would have to be able to overpower the Holy Spirit to get by him to enter in and possess a believer- **and that will not happen!** **That which is in will be kept in, in its original condition, and that which is out will be kept out;** and the Holy Spirit is the seal that guarantees that!

Are you starting to see; are you beginning to believe that our salvation is eternally secure! The guarantee for all this is not our own puny, pitiful works, but the power of the Almighty God! It is he who saves us, and it is he who keeps us saved, now and forever more. As said before, those who reject the doctrine of eternal security are either woefully ignorant of what the Bible teaches, or they just don't want to believe it, or both!

J. Kept By God

“To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy-” Jude 24

Now we go back to address the issue of whether we are kept saved by our own feeble efforts, or by the power of God? Which is it? It can't be both. Do you honestly believe that you have to keep yourself saved? How in the world could you ever think that? Do you hear what you're saying? OK, then, **what is your plan of action?** Do you have the righteousness that Christ had when he was here on earth in the flesh? I didn't think so. Do you have the same committed resolve that he did to do the Father's will? Hah! How about faith, do you exercise the perfect faith that he did here on earth? I speak like a fool. What about moral integrity, do you have the same as he does? Do you avoid all sins? That's ridiculous, most believers aren't even aware of all the things that constitute sin!

“Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” Are you believing, trusting in the Father's provisions, plan and power every second of your existence? I think not.

Well, what's your plan? **How in the world are you planning to keep yourself saved?** And what about the power to do this? Do you have the power of God? I didn't think so. Well, if you're going to keep yourself saved, then why not get yourself to heaven! What's that? I didn't hear that. You say, "I can't do that, in fact, I don't even know where heaven's at, let alone be able to get there." Well, if you don't even know where heaven is at, and you don't have the means to get there, how in the world did you ever think that you had the knowledge and power to keep yourself saved? If you can't do the one, then you certainly can't do the other; the one is a mechanic, the other is a dynamic.

Jude tells us that it is **God who has the power to keep us from falling**, not ourselves. If you're looking to yourself, then you're looking to the wrong person! You are man-centered in your theology and not God-centered. Me thinks you need to shift the focus of your faith from yourself to God!

And he also tells us that it is God who has the power, and will accomplish it, to present us to himself in his glorious presence and we in bodies of glory. Do we have the power to do this? Can we raise ourselves from the dead? Can we make ourselves resurrection, eternal bodies? We can't even keep the fat off the ones we have, or keep our hair from falling out. How can we do that! If God brought us to Christ when we fought him all the way, don't you think that God, now, will take us to Christ when we want to be with him so much?

Remember what the matter of faith is all about. It never looks to the one that is exercising the faith, but to **the object of that faith**; one's trust is in him. In faith I trusted Christ to receive me and forgive me; and it's that same faith that I trust Christ to bring me home all the way to heaven. It's not my works or abilities that accomplish this, but a total trust in God to do this. Our eternal security rests upon the integrity, the faithfulness, the finished work of Christ on our behalf, and the will, the work and the power of God.

K. Fallen From Grace

"It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the Word of God, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace."

Hebrews 6:4-6

There are many passages in the NT that we could go into to prove our salvation is secure and eternal, but the ones we have covered are sufficient to accomplish that. Besides, there are many out there who will not believe it no matter how many convincing proofs we exegete, because there are three, maybe four passages that tend to indicate the opposite. So what we will do is study them to see what they're really saying. The first one is Hebrews 6 with the statement of, "*Ye have fallen from grace*", and how that has struck fear in the hearts of so many believers in Christ.

Some are so sure that this means that someone can lose their salvation, they kind of "reverse engineer" the passage to have it apply in the sense that these people were never

saved in the first place! But there are four statements made here to show conclusively that these were believers in Christ: one, they had been enlightened; two, they had tasted the heavenly gift; three, they had shared in the Holy Spirit; and four, they had tasted the goodness of the Word of God.

To begin with, *adunaton*, (*it is impossible*), is placed at the beginning of the passage to emphasize that something is impossible, under certain conditions, to be brought to the place of repentance. Even the concept of repentance is greatly understood by virtually all Christians today, but we'll cover it later on.

In the original we have, "*adunaton gar*", *for it is impossible*, and the word *for*, *gar*, refers back to v.1-3 where the writer is talking about going on to spiritual maturity and leaving the basics behind. He even chides them in Heb.5:11-14 about needing basic doctrines, the milk of the Word, when they should be teaching the Word by now. By the way, how many churches out there are teaching the deeper truths of the faith, and how many Christians are sitting under mature doctrine? Most of them have never gone past the basic teachings of the faith, (the gospel), and many churches aren't even teaching the Word at all! Which tells us that the majority of Christians today are in need of repentance.

Now it says, "*those who have once been enlightened*", with the word *hapax* for *once*. *Hapax* is used to denote something that only occurs once. It is a numerical singularity and completeness that has no additions past it; it only occurs one time. Which goes to tell us that this matter of being *enlightened*, that is, believing on Christ, occurs only one time. **It is a one time act that needs not to be repeated and cannot be repeated! We are saved one time for all time!**

To be *enlightened* is the aurist passive participle of *photizo*. And, as we have seen, the action of the aurist participle precedes the action of the main verb, so all these things being mentioned here describe **the action of the believer having been saved at one time in their life**. *Photizo* meant to be enlightened, to shine, to illuminate, and is to be taken in its metaphorical sense of spiritual enlightenment. Once anyone is saved their "eyes are open" to matters pertaining to God, Christ and other spiritual truths.

"*Who have tasted the heavenly gift*" is the aurist middle participle of *geuomai*, which meant to taste, to eat, to partake of something, to enjoy, to obtain and to experience. Some have tried to make a distinction between tasting and eating to diminish its impact, but the word is used of "*Christ tasting death for everyone*" and we all know that he died, he actually experienced death, Hebrews 2:9. So what this is telling us is that they had experienced the heavenly gift.

"*The heavenly gift*", *epouranos*, is that which pertains to the heavens, that which has come from the heavens and is **a reference to the Holy Spirit who was sent down to the people of God right after the Church Age began**. And it is a gift given only to the enlightened ones, those who have believed on Christ as their Savior.

"*Who have shared in the Holy Spirit*" is connected to the preceding clause by the word *te*, which tells us that the gift that has come down to us out of the heavens is the Holy

Spirit, who was the Spirit promised to Israel and to us in the OT. “*Who have shared*”, the aorist passive participle of *metochos*, tells us that this action also occurred in the past along with the others at the moment of our salvation, and that we received the action of the verb, passive voice. *Metochos* would be to share in something, such as a large meal for many people. **All believers have become partakers in the Holy Spirit.**

“*And have tasted in the goodness of the Word of God*”, or in the aorist middle participle, “*And having tasted the Word of God [and seen] that it is good.*” It's like eating a delicious dish that you have heard so much about, then one day the chef prepares it for you and by eating it you see for yourself how good it is. The same way for the eating of the Word of God by faith, or as we refer to it as the **metabolization** process where one takes in the Word and its teaching by faith. **The epignosis knowledge of God is acquired as the believer in Christ listens to, understand and believes the Word by faith, under the filling of the Holy Spirit.**

So what this tells us is that these people had been enlightened; they had experienced God's gift to them of the Holy Spirit and had been metabolizing the Word of God by faith and seen for themselves that it was good. And had sampled the powers of the coming age!

“*And the powers of the Coming Age*” looks not only at the millennial reign of Christ but the eternal age to come. **The coming age is an age that will be characterized by power**, power in many areas and ways. We had seen the power of God in healing the sick, raising the dead and so on, these are all manifestations of the power of God working through the Holy Spirit. **The Coming Age will be one where these powers will be made available to all the people of God as they exercise faith!** Mind-boggling? Yes! But it is what God has saved us for and what he will give us access to in the eternal state!

Now we get into the problem of the passage that says, “*If they fall away*”, that so many have had doubts arise from. The word *fall away* is *parapipto* in the aorist active participle, and could be translated as, “*and having fallen away*”, if we take the translations that we have. But *parapipto* meant: to fall beside, to go astray, to miss, to sin, to err, to commit apostasy, to become lost, to miss one's way, to make a mistake, to turn up somewhere or the other, to deviate to one side or the other and to be led somewhere.

Here are the definitions of *pipto* and how it is changed by the use of different prepositions and once can readily see that it isn't to “*fall from grace*”:

<i>apopipto-</i>	to fall from
<i>ekpipto-</i>	“ “ out of
<i>empipto-</i>	“ “ into
<i>epipipto-</i>	“ “ upon
<i>katapipto-</i>	“ “ down
<i>peripipto-</i>	“ “ around
<i>parapipto-</i>	“ “ alongside

The best way to understand *parapipto* is its original use as a nautical term and was used of a boat that had drifted off course. The helmsman had his charts and his compass; he

had his direction and destination in mind, but somehow, due to either a storm of adversity, or a lapse into pleasure and carelessness, he had taken his eyes off the compass; he had lost his bearings and now was either drifting or sailing off course.

The interpretation and application of this passage for the Christian is not that he had fallen from grace, but that **he has drifted off course from grace!** As believers in Christ we are to be living our lives in the true filling of the Holy Spirit, taking in the Word of God, living separated lives from the world system and living by faith. **Any departure from the Word of God, or from living by the faith principle in our lives is a departure from grace!**

To understand how this works we have to see, first of all, that God deals with us on the basis of grace because we live in the Age of Grace. The next thing we see is that it is **only faith that is compatible with grace**. And the third thing is that **faith must always have an object and the only object for biblical faith is the Word of God! So any departure from faith living, and/or doctrine is a departure, or a drifting off course from grace!**

“*If*” is not found in the original; it's not if they have drifted off course from grace; it's already assuming that they have, so it's stating a condition that Christians get into. We could translate it thus far, *“It is impossible for those once having been enlightened, having tasted the heavenly gift, and having shared in the Holy Spirit, and having tasted that God's Word is good, and having tasted the powers of the age to come in the future, and having drifted off course from the doctrinal/grace life to be brought back to repentance.”*

That's how it should be read, **but it should not be allowed to end here**, for that is an incomplete sentence and conveys an incorrect idea. It's not saying that it's impossible for them to be brought back to the place of repentance, (and that's repentance, not salvation), **but that it's impossible to bring them back to repentance while something else is going on that they are involved in!**

The key lies in the present active participle of *anastauroo*, to crucify all over again, which without the definite article, puts it in the predicate position with a temporal idea of while! **It is impossible to bring these believers back to a place of repentance while they are crucifying the Son of God all over again. The one cannot be done while they are involved in the other.**

“*To be brought back to repentance*”, is *palin anakainizein eis metanoian*, and we notice the use of the word *metanoia*. **Salvation** is not used, neither is **forgiveness**. If it were forgiveness, then a simple confession of sin would do. If it were salvation, then it would be, “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*”, but it isn't, it's **repentance** which is something altogether different.

Repentance is a Christian phenomenon that is needed whenever a believer is in reversionism, who needs to have **a total change of mental attitude toward grace, faith, doctrine and the doctrinal system of God**. (See study on 2 Corinthians 7).

Repentance (*metanoia*) is needed when a believer is away from the doctrinal/grace/faith life and has got caught up in: some form of old sin nature activity of the flesh, or some form of religious activity, where he goes into organized religion with its rituals, programs, legalism, works, etc., or into the latest goofy little group to come down the pike, or it could be that they go into the occult, or back to being active in the community, or into the Masonic lodges, or, as the case is here, **to go back into the temple!**

Now even those believers out there who are trying to “repent” are doing all sorts of crazy things to show they are “repenting”, or trying to repent. They flock to the front of the church after the services to “rededicate” themselves after the altar call of the preacher. Or, they're sitting up front on the “mourner's bench” crying and showing everybody how sorry they are. Or, they give up something they enjoy doing to show their sorrow. And some get into self-flagellation, literal and psychological, all to show they have repented, or as a part of the process of repentance. And none of this is repentance!

The problem most Christians have is that they don't understand what the word repentance is because their ministers have not taught them. The ministers don't know because they have never been taught; they don't want to know, or they too have been misled by those above them, or who have trained them.

The word *repent* comes from two Greek words, *meta-* to change, and *noeo-* the mind, to change the mind. **It's not to feel sorry!** There is a separate Greek word for that and it's *metamelomai*. That's what Judas did; he felt sorry about what he had done and it didn't do him any good. One of the problems lies with the choice of the translators in using the word *repent* to translate the Greek word *metanoeo*. *Repent* comes from the Latin, (once again we see the influence of Rome in all this), **and it means to have pain, or to feel pain again**. Penance is very much a Roman doctrine, but was never in biblical Christianity. **To feel sorry about what you have done is not the same thing as to have a change of mental attitude toward the spiritual faith life God wants us to live!**

“To be brought back again” is *palin* with *anakainizo*, a variant of *anakainoo*. *Palin* meant to return to a previous activity, or to a previous state. *Anakainizo* comes from two words, *ana-* again or back, and *kainizo-* to make new. It meant to be renewed or restored, to give new life to the new life that is already there. *Anakainoo* is used in: 2 Corinthians 4:16. *“Though the outer man is wasting away, the inner man is being renewed day by day”*; Colossians 3:10, *“and have put on the new man which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its creator”*; Romans 12:2, *“but be transformed by the renewing of your mind”*; and Titus 3:5, *“...He saved us through the washing of rebirth and the renewal of the Holy Spirit”*.

The passage says **to be restored again unto repentance, or to be restored again unto a change of mental attitude toward grace, faith and truth**. It's to be restored unto repentance, **not unto enlightenment or salvation**. It's to bring these believers back to a former spiritual condition, not to salvation.

At one time they were sitting under the teaching of the Word of God by a Pastor-Teacher, learning the Word, growing in grace, living life by faith in the filling of the Holy Spirit,

living in their new natures outside the influence of the flesh, and they drifted away from it! To restore is to bring them back to that place of the spiritual dynamic, not salvation.

But something is going on in their lives that prevents their restoration to that place. They had drifted away from the doctrinal life, and all that entails, and had ended up in something, that prevented them from being restored, **as long as they were still involved in it!** What was it they were doing? They were back in the temple.

“They are crucifying the Son of God all over again” is the present active participle of *anastairoo*. Now the other words were in the aoist participle, but this one shifts to the present participle to show that this was their **present practice**. It also takes on the temporal idea and should be rendered by the words, “*while*”, or, “*as long as*”. *“It is impossible to restore them as long as, or while they are crucifying the Lord all over again.”*

The **temple in Jerusalem** is in view here for this letter was written to the Christians still living in Jerusalem at that time. One of the big problems that came about as the result of those Israelites who had believed on Christ as their Savior was **the economic persecution they suffered**. If they were laborers, they wouldn't get hired. If they were contractors, they wouldn't get the jobs. If they owned shops, people wouldn't buy from them. If they had been attending a synagogue, they would be expelled by a ceremonial “slap in the face”, (that's where the “*turn the cheek*” idea came from and applied).

So you can see the problem they faced. They could either stay in their churches and keep on taking in the Word, and suffer terribly financially, even to the place where they might be forced to leave town or country to survive, or they could go back to the temple and be a part once again of the religious and social life of their community! But by going back into the temple they were crucifying the Son of God all over again in public view! This was definitely not allowed by God and an insult to the Lord.

You see, the sacrifices of the temple system never took away any body's sins! It was only the one time sacrificial atonement of Jesus Christ that fully and completely paid the penalty for all our sins. But by going back to the temple they were saying in effect that Christ's death did not satisfy the righteousness of God for the atonement! God wanted to restore them back to the spiritual dynamic of faith in the Word, but it was impossible as long as they were involved in the temple system. So they had to get out of it, have a change of mental attitude toward the Word, and get back under the authority and teaching of a Pastor-Teacher in the local church.

So what this passage is teaching is not that Christians can lose their salvation, but that Christians do get away from the doctrinal life of a local church and end up somewhere. They may end up in the bars, or the houses of ill-repute; they may end up in the New Age movement or some other cult, or they may end up in some legalistic religion. **It's impossible to restore these Christians to repentance, to having a change of mental attitude toward the spiritual life, though, as long as, or while they are involved in that other stuff. They need, they must first come out of it and then re-identify themselves with some church that teaches the Word of God and put**

themselves under the authority of that Pastor-Teacher. Confession of sin along the way, 1 John 1:9, plays a part in that also.

L. Dogs, Sows and Sheep

“Of them the proverbs are true: 'A dog returns to its vomit,' and, 'A sow returns to her wallowing in the mud.'” 2 Peter 2:22

The word for “*proverbs*” here, *paroimias*, is not a reference to the book of Proverbs. *Paroimias* was the word found in general use by people in society; it was a **saying** that was used by everybody. The book of Proverbs does use one of these expressions, “*As a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool does to his folly*”, Proverbs 26:11, and it too was an expression used by people living at that time in the OT.

To set the context for this we need to back up a little bit where it says to have **known the way of righteousness and turned their backs on it**. The way of righteousness, or how does one become righteous, is **by faith in Jesus Christ**. **So what we have are people who have heard the gospel of God's grace about how they can be cleansed and forgiven by believing on Jesus Christ as their Savior and turned their back on it! They never were saved in the first place. They had heard the gospel of salvation and would not receive it.**

Now Peter uses sayings that were common in those days to tell us **what these people were like**. The **men**, who had rejected the gospel, **were like the dogs who went back and ate their own vomit**. The **women**, who had rejected the gospel, **were like sows, (female pigs), who, after being cleaned, went back to wallowing in the mud!**

You say, “Well there you have it Mike, she was washed and went back to the mud! That proves she was a Christian!” Not too fast, tiger, let's look at the grammar. The word for *wash, lousamene*, is the arist middle participle of louo. Now the middle voice is reflexive telling us that the subject produces the action of the verb and takes part in it. **Do you hear what it's saying? She washed herself! She was never saved!**

Everywhere in the NT the passive voice is used **when referring to true Christians**; they were cleansed; they were forgiven; they were saved; they were justified, etc., etc., showing that God was doing the action and they were receiving it. But here we see that **she was the one doing the action, not God**. This is a picture of an unsaved female who has made a religious profession, religious experience, or had an emotional experience, or a variety of many other things, what they are is unimportant. What is important is that she never had an inward change by faith in Jesus Christ and the receiving of a new nature. There may have been an external change, but not internal. **She had heard the gospel of grace, rejected it and went back to whatever she was doing before!**

Now we come to the sheep. Throughout the entire Bible, both OT and NT, we find that **only God's people are referred to as sheep!** Not dogs, not sows, not wolves, but sheep. And we need to go to 1 Peter 2:25, “*For you were like sheep going astray, but now you*

have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” This is a simile where one thing is like another; as sheep are to their shepherd, so are we to Christ.

To grasp the impact of all this we need to compare the **grammatical significance of the three verbs used in these passages concerning dogs, sows and sheep**. The dog, (an unsaved man who has heard and rejected the gospel of Christ), does return to his vomit; and the sow, (an unsaved woman, who has heard the gospel of Christ and rejected it), does go back to her wallowing in the mud; and then there are the sheep who return to their shepherd! The first thing we want to note is **where do they all end up?** The dog ends up at his vomit; the sow ends up in the mud, but the sheep end up at their shepherd!

Now the grammar. In the case of the dogs and the sows the active voice is used. What this tells us is that **in both cases these people of their own decision, by the exercise of their own will, not only reject the gospel, but go back to what they were doing before!** But only in the case of the sheep do we find **the passive voice used!** The passive voice is where the subject does not produce the action of the verb, but simply receives it! The verb is *epistropho*, to return. So what does that make it? It says that **the sheep are being returned to their Shepherd.** We may wander; we may stray from God, but it is the power of God that returns us to our Shepherd, and I might add, sometimes a little worse for wear. One other thing, in the cases of the dogs and sows the participial forms are used, but in the case of the sheep the indicative mood is used **to denote the reality of our being returned to our Shepherd, Jesus Christ.**

Over a century ago, Dr. Ethelbert Bullinger wrote the most wonderful article of clarity on this, with such amazing doctrinal insight. I quote:

“Both the stray sheep and the washed sow return. But the one returns to the Shepherd and the other to the mire. In the verb to return, the passive voice is used of the sheep, while the active is used of the sow. Showing the sheep is made to return to its shepherd by a constraining power, while the sow returns to the mire of its own act and free will.” And, “When we contrast 1 Peter 2:25 with 2 Peter 2:22, we see how forcible is the difference between the saved sinner and the reformed character. The saint may go astray, and the ungodly may reform; but they both turn again, the one to his shepherd, and the other to his mire! There is all the difference in the world between a dirty sheep and a washed sow.” And he also wrote, “How many hirelings are there who are engaged in merely washing sows and amusing goats, instead of seeking out and feeding Christ's harassed and scattered and famishing sheep, who are at their wit's ends to know where to find a little green grass, or fresh water, which has not been trodden down with the feet of goats, or defiled with the vomit of dogs?”

There is a recent phenomenon going on here in America in many of the churches, one that boggles the mind. People are standing up in their services and barking like dogs and howling like wolves. They claim that it's the “Holy” Spirit who is making them do this, (but when did Christ, who was full of the Spirit, ever do this, or any of the Apostles, all who conducted themselves with such dignity), but is it the true filling of the true Holy Spirit, or some other spirit making them do this? Remember, the term “dogs” is a reference to unsaved men, and the term “wolves” is again a reference to the unsaved.

My dear friend, if you have not rejected the gospel of Christ, then you are neither a dog, nor a sow. Can you not see that now? If you have believed on Jesus Christ as your Savior, you are now righteous in the eyes of God and one of his precious sheep, and you will always be one of his precious sheep! And if you have stayed from the Shepherd, as we are so prone to do, fear not, it is he who will return you to him. Remember the story of the shepherd who had one hundred sheep, and if one went astray, he did not rest until he had brought it back to the fold? Wandering sheep do not return; **they are returned!!** It may not be pleasant, but he will. I pray that these insights will be of great encouragement to you in your faith. It is impossible for us to lose our salvation, and every passage in the Bible on that subject teaches.

Pastor Mike