



The Everlasting Grace of God

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The cover image was inspired by this Scripture passage:

Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “I am the LORD your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way you should go. Oh that you had paid attention to My commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea; your offspring would have been like the sand, and your descendants like its grains; their name would never be cut off or destroyed from before me.” (Isaiah 48:17–19) ESV

Contents

1. For the Glory of God	1
Benefits a Believer Receives	2
2. God's Character Toward a Believer	3
God's Love & Mercy	3
God's Gift & Grace.....	5
God's Promises & Faithfulness	6
God's Preservation & Keeping	8
3. God's Conversion of a Believer	10
Born Again.....	10
New Creation	11
God's Child	12
God's Sheep.....	14
Made Alive.....	16
Sealed by the Spirit.....	17
Destined for Glory	18
Under Grace	20
4. Incorrectly Applied Passages	21
Interpret in the Light of Clear Passages	21
5. Assurance of Salvation	28
Rest on the Authority of God's Word.....	29
6. Behavior & Works Matter	31
Not Forgive, Not Forgiven.....	32
The Book of James.....	34
Sheep & Goats	37
7. Regarding Water Baptism	39
8. How to Be Saved.....	42

1. For the Glory of God

Salvation is a wonderful gift that believers receive simply through faith that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again.

- For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3–4) NKJV

For the purposes of this booklet, the definition of a believer is someone who has genuinely believed the message of salvation, which means that they have truly acknowledged their sinfulness, and truly put their trust in the Lord Jesus and what He has done for their salvation. The message of salvation is discussed in more detail in the last chapter of this booklet

There is much confusion regarding if a believer can lose their salvation or not. Taking a few verses out of context can result in a wrong understanding, and therefore it is important to look at the testimony of Scripture as a whole.

Salvation is a work of God and is for His glory.

- Also your people shall all be righteous; They shall inherit the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified. (Isaiah 60:21) NKJV
- That in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:11) NKJV
- For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do it; For how should My name be profaned? And I will not give My glory to another. (Isaiah 48:11) NKJV
- I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another (Isaiah 42:8) NKJV

When someone believes, God starts a work in their life and He will not fail to bring it to completion.

- Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.” (Genesis 28:15) NKJV
- Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6) NKJV
- Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2) NKJV

Benefits a Believer Receives

When someone puts their trust in the Lord, they will receive His salvation benefits.

- Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s. (Psalm 103:2–5) NKJV

The main salvation benefit that a believer receives is God Himself. God is the source of peace and joy and love and all that is good. There is nothing better than to be in relationship with God, and He is the fountain of all true pleasure and fulfillment.

- You are good, and do good (Psalm 119:68) NKJV
- Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! (1 Chronicles 16:34) NKJV
- For You have made him most blessed forever; You have made him exceedingly glad with Your presence. (Psalm 21:6) NKJV
- In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Psalm 16:11) NKJV

Another salvation benefit that someone receives upon believing in Christ, is that they are eternally secure in that salvation, and it can never be lost.

A believer can stray and can face many painful doubts and struggles and failures, but they cannot lose their salvation. They will experience the benefits of the everlasting grace of God in many significant ways that cannot be undone.

Some of these ways will be discussed in the following two chapters:

1. God's Character Toward a Believer
 2. God's Conversion of a Believer
- Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work. (2 Thessalonians 2:16–17) NKJV

2. God's Character Toward a Believer

God's character toward someone, upon faith in Christ, is expressed in many beneficial ways which cannot be undone.

The following sections in this chapter will discuss four of these ways.

God's Love & Mercy

God's love and mercy for a believer cannot cease. His love and mercy for a believer will never come to an end.

- The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; His mercies never come to an end (Lamentations 3:22) ESV
- Praise the LORD! Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. (Psalm 106:1) NKJV

- Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise! Give thanks to Him; bless His name! For the LORD is good; His steadfast love endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations. (Psalm 100:4–5) ESV
- Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. (Psalm 23:6) NKJV
- “For the mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, but My lovingkindness will not be removed from you, and My covenant of peace will not be shaken,” Says the LORD who has compassion on you. (Isaiah 54:10) NASB

Nothing we do or don't do in our life or death can separate us from God's love. Nothing we do or don't do in our past or present or future can separate us from God's love.

- Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35–39) NKJV

Praise the Lord for His everlasting love and mercy toward believers!!!

- So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. (Romans 9:16) ESV
- O my Strength, I will sing praises to You, for You, O God, are my fortress, the God who shows me steadfast love. (Psalm 59:17) ESV

God's Gift & Grace

God's gift and grace for a believer cannot be revoked. The gift of His grace for a believer is certain and will not change.

- For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. (Romans 11:29) NKJV
- Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. (James 1:17) ESV

Salvation is a gift of God's grace alone. There is nothing we can do, or not do, to earn it. And after receiving His gift, there is nothing we can do, or not do, to lose it.

- For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23) ESV
- For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8–9) NKJV
- For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one Man Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:17) ESV
- But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:57) NKJV
- For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? (1 Corinthians 4:7) NKJV

Praise the Lord for His everlasting gift and grace for believers!!!

- To the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. (Ephesians 1:6) NKJV

God's Promises & Faithfulness

God's promises and faithfulness to a believer cannot fail. His promises and His faithfulness are sure.

- Not one thing has failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed. (Joshua 23:14) NKJV
- For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect, because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (Romans 4:13–16) NKJV
- “God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?” (Numbers 23:19) NKJV

The Lord has made an everlasting covenant, promising eternal life to all believers, and He is faithful to bring that to fulfillment.

- This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life. (1 John 2:25) NASB
- He has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. For this is all my salvation and all my desire (2 Samuel 23:5) NKJV
- Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it. (1 Thessalonians 5:23–24) NKJV

- But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one. (2 Thessalonians 3:3) NKJV
- I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, ...who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:4–9) NKJV

God's faithfulness to Israel, in spite of their failures, is also a picture of God's faithfulness to believers, in spite of our failures.

- Thus says the LORD: "If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, declares the LORD." (Jeremiah 31:37) ESV
- "Then you shall know that I am the LORD, when I have dealt with you for My name's sake, not according to your wicked ways nor according to your corrupt doings, O house of Israel," says the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 20:44) NKJV

Praise the Lord for His everlasting promises and faithfulness to believers!!!

- I will also praise You with the harp for Your faithfulness, O my God; I will sing praises to You with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel. (Psalm 71:22) ESV
- Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22–23) NKJV

God's Preservation & Keeping

God's preservation of a believer cannot be forsaken. He will keep them and never leave them.

- He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5) NKJV
- For the LORD loves justice, and does not forsake His saints; They are preserved forever, but the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off. (Psalm 37:28) NKJV
- He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints. (Proverbs 2:8) NKJV
- He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber...The LORD is your keeper...The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore. (Psalm 121:3–8) NKJV
- Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ (Jude 1) NKJV
- Nevertheless in Your great mercy You did not utterly consume them nor forsake them; For You are God, gracious and merciful. (Nehemiah 9:31) NKJV

The Lord guards believers (saints), and intercedes for them, and does not permit them to be moved outside of His blessing.

- He will guard the feet of His saints, but the wicked shall be silent in darkness. "For by strength no man shall prevail. (1 Samuel 2:9) NKJV
- The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand. (Psalm 37:23–24) NKJV

- O LORD, You brought my soul up from the grave; You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. (Psalm 30:3) NKJV
- Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25) NKJV
- Cast your burden on the LORD, and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved. (Psalm 55:22) NKJV
- Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds His people from this time forth and forever. (Psalm 125:1–2) NKJV

Praise the Lord for His everlasting preservation and keeping of believers!!!

- And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen! (2 Timothy 4:18) NKJV
- Oh, bless our God, you peoples! And make the voice of His praise to be heard, Who keeps our soul among the living, and does not allow our feet to be moved. (Psalm 66:8–9) NKJV
- Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, Who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen. (Jude 24–25) NKJV

3. God's Conversion of a Believer

God's conversion of someone, upon faith in Christ, results in many beneficial changes which cannot be undone.

The following sections in this chapter will discuss eight of these changes.

Born Again

Upon faith in Christ, God converts a person from being born of the flesh, to being born of the Holy Spirit.

A believer cannot be "un-born" of the Spirit, just like they could not be physically "un-born".

- Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' (John 3:3–7) NKJV
- Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God (1 John 5:1) NKJV
- But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. (Galatians 4:29) NKJV

Obedying the truth, in the passage below, refers to obeying God's command to believe in Jesus. A believer has been born again through the word of God, which remains forever, and so a believer can never be lost.

- Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of

corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever (1 Peter 1:22–23) NKJV

- And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ (1 John 3:23) NKJV
- According to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith (Romans 16:26) NKJV
- Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. (John 3:36) ESV

Praise the Lord for making believers born again!!!

- Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter 1:3–5) NASB

New Creation

Upon faith in Christ, God converts a person from being of their old nature, to being a new creation in Christ.

A believer's old nature has been crucified with Christ. Their old nature cannot be resurrected, and their new nature cannot be "un-created".

- I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20) NKJV
- Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him (Romans 6:6–8) NKJV

- Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17) NKJV
- Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:5–7) NKJV

Praise the Lord for making believers new creations!!!

- But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. (Galatians 6:14–15) NKJV

God's Child

Upon faith in Christ, God converts a person from being a child of the devil, to being a child of God.

A believer, having God as their Father, cannot be disowned from being His child.

- For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:26) NKJV
- But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:12–13) NKJV
- Therefore “Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and

daughters, says the LORD Almighty.” (2 Corinthians 6:17–18) NKJV

- Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. (John 8:42–44) NKJV

God disciplines His children, but He will never disown them.

- I will not die, but live, and tell of the works of the LORD. The LORD has disciplined me severely, but He has not given me over to death. (Psalm 118:17–18) NASB
- If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. (Hebrews 12:7–8) NKJV
- I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him (2 Samuel 7:14–15) NKJV
- For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. (Psalm 30:5) NKJV
- In overflowing anger for a moment I hid My face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD, your Redeemer. (Isaiah 54:8) ESV

A child of God will remain with Him forever.

- Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the

house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. (John 8:34–36) NKJV

- And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. (Galatians 4:6–7) NKJV

Praise the Lord for making believers His children!!!

- Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. (1 John 3:1–2) NKJV

God's Sheep

Upon faith in Christ, God converts a person from being a dog (or wolf), to being a sheep.

A believer cannot turn back into a dog, and cannot ever perish from the Shepherd's protection.

- My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. (John 10:27–29) NKJV
- Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. (Matthew 10:16) NKJV
- Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. (Matthew 7:15) NKJV
- Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! (Philippians 3:2) NKJV

- But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. (Revelation 22:15) NKJV

The passage below does not teach that a believer can lose their salvation. In fact, it shows that a dog that returns to its vomit is still a dog and was never converted to a sheep. In a similar fashion, the sow had a show of “cleaning up” but was never changed in nature and was still a sow. This illustrates people who were never saved to begin with, so they did not have any salvation to lose.

- For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.” (2 Peter 2:20–22) NKJV

This is similar to the passage below in which people have a show of works, but have not done the will of the Father by confessing their sinfulness and placing their trust in Christ.

- Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to Me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and cast out demons in Your name, and do many mighty works in Your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.’ (Matthew 7:21–23) ESV

Also, notice above how the Lord said “I never knew you”, and He did not say something like “I knew you earlier, but you failed”.

People may deceive themselves but the Lord is not deceived, and He knows those who are His genuine sheep, and who are dogs.

- But you do not believe because you are not among My sheep. (John 10:26) ESV

- I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. (John 10:14–15) NKJV

Praise the Lord for making believers His sheep!!!

- Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (Hebrews 13:20–21) NKJV

Made Alive

Upon faith in Christ, God converts a person from being dead, to being made alive.

A believer is given everlasting life, and cannot lose it.

- And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses (Colossians 2:13) NKJV
- And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world (Ephesians 2:1–2) NKJV

Believers are given everlasting life as a present possession. If a believer could lose it, then it would not be everlasting.

- Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. (John 6:47) NKJV
- He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” (John 3:36) NKJV

- For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16) NKJV
- And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:11–13) NKJV
- And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this? (John 11:26) NKJV

Praise the Lord for making believers alive!!!

- But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) (Ephesians 2:4–5) NKJV

Sealed by the Spirit

Upon faith in Christ, God converts a person from being marked in iniquity, to being sealed by the Holy Spirit, and their inheritance is guaranteed.

A believer cannot be “un-sealed”, and the inheritance cannot be “un-guaranteed”.

- If I sin, then You mark me, and will not acquit me of my iniquity. (Job 10:14) NKJV
- For though you wash yourself with lye, and use much soap, yet your iniquity is marked before Me,” says the Lord GOD. (Jeremiah 2:22) NKJV
- If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared. (Psalm 130:3–4) NKJV

- And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30) NKJV
- But as God is faithful, our word to you was not Yes and No. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me, Silvanus, and Timothy—was not Yes and No, but in Him was Yes. For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. (2 Corinthians 1:18–22) NKJV
- Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. (2 Corinthians 5:5) NKJV

Praise the Lord for making believers sealed by the Holy Spirit!!!

- In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:13–14) NKJV

Destined for Glory

Upon faith in Christ, God converts a person from being prepared for destruction, to being destined for glory.

A believer's future glorification is certain, and God's promise cannot be violated.

- For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things. (Philippians 3:18–19) NKJV

- These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power (2 Thessalonians 1:9) NKJV
- What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory (Romans 9:22–23) NKJV
- And the glory which You gave Me I have given them (John 17:22) NKJV
- When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. (Colossians 3:4) NKJV
- Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. (2 Timothy 2:10) NKJV

Glorification includes resurrection to a glorified body that is absolutely free from sin and corruption and death. God will not fail to preserve believers and raise them up in glory.

- There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. (1 Corinthians 15:40–44) NKJV
- This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:39–40) NKJV

According to God's promise, all those who have been justified by Him (believers) are destined to glorification by Him.

- For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. (Romans 8:29–30) NKJV

Praise the Lord for making believers destined for glory!!!

- But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 5:10–11) NKJV

Under Grace

Upon faith in Christ, God converts a person from being under law, to being under grace.

A believer is under God's grace forever, and cannot be condemned, and cannot come into judgment.

- For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. (Romans 6:14) NKJV
- But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. (Galatians 5:18) NKJV
- Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. (Galatians 3:24–25) NKJV
- Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. (Romans 8:1–2) NASB
- “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not

come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. (John 5:24) NKJV

Praise the Lord for making believers under His grace!!!

- That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:7) NKJV

4. Incorrectly Applied Passages

Some people come to wrong conclusions regarding the security of a believer by taking certain Scripture passages out of Biblical context.

The following section will discuss a few examples of passages that are sometimes incorrectly applied in an attempt to teach that a believer can lose their salvation.

Interpret in the Light of Clear Passages

A very important principle in learning the Scriptures is that we must interpret harder to understand passages in the light of clear passages.

Revelation 3:5

- He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. (Revelation 3:5) NKJV

This passage does not teach that a believer can fail to overcome, and therefore have their name blotted out of the Book of Life.

In fact, this passage is actually saying that all believers are overcomers, and therefore will not have their names blotted out.

The Lord Jesus is the only ONE who overcame, and overcomers (such as in the Revelation promises to overcomers) are simply those who have put their trust in HIM. It is explained well in the

passage below as simply one whose faith is in the Lord Jesus, and therefore was born again.

- For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:4–5) NKJV

The passage below uses a related Greek word and could be translated as “we are more than overcomers through Him”.

- Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:37–39) NKJV

The verse below uses a related Greek word and could be translated as “who gives us the overcoming through our Lord Jesus Christ”.

- But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:57) NKJV

Romans 11:22

- Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. (Romans 11:22) NKJV

This passage does not teach that a believer can fail to continue in His goodness, and therefore be cut off.

In fact, this passage is actually referring to Israel (Jews) and Gentiles as groups in general, and it is not referring to individuals.

This is clearly seen when taking Romans Chapter 11 as a whole, instead of taking verse 22 out of context.

- I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:11–13) NKJV
- For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; (Romans 11:24–26) NKJV

Matthew 24:13

- But he who endures to the end shall be saved. (Matthew 24:13) NKJV

This passage does not teach that a believer can fail to endure to the end of their lives, and therefore not be saved.

In fact, this passage is actually referring specifically to earthly salvation for believers in the tribulation period, and it is not referring to eternal salvation for believers in general.

The believing mortals who endure to the end of the tribulation will be saved from the antichrist by the arrival of the Lord Jesus, and therefore they will proceed as mortals into the millennial kingdom.

The verse below is just a few verses before the verse above. The end of the age refers to the end of the tribulation, which is when Christ's second coming will be.

- Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” (Matthew 24:3) NKJV

Matthew 25:10-12

- And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' (Matthew 25:10–12) NKJV

This passage does not teach that some believers will fail to be ready, and therefore be shut out of heaven.

In fact, this passage from the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13) is actually teaching that some people can have the appearance of being believers, and hang around genuine believers, but not actually be genuine believers themselves.

Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit in Scripture. Here is one example:

- Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. (1 Samuel 16:13) NKJV

The foolish virgins did not have oil, and therefore represent those who are not believers since true believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

- Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. (Matthew 25:3–4) NKJV

The foolish virgins are representative of those who have a temporary show or appearance of being believers, but are not true believers in heart. Their lamps appeared to give light, but they fizzled out and were shown to be false.

- Having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. (2 Timothy 3:5) ESV

They asked the wise virgins to give them some of their oil, however faith is a personal matter and cannot be transferred.

- And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’ (Matthew 25:8–9) ESV

The verses above mention “buy for yourselves”. One must believe for themselves in order to be saved. Anyone who desires can obtain God’s salvation freely, by buying it without price, since Jesus paid the price in full.

- “Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. (Isaiah 55:1) NKJV
- And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely. (Revelation 22:17) NKJV
- I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. (Revelation 3:18) NKJV

In verse 11 of Matthew 25, the foolish virgins said “Lord, Lord”, and in verse 12 the bridegroom said “I do not know you”. This is similar to “Lord, Lord” and “I never knew you” in the passage below, which was discussed in the previous chapter.

- Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to Me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and cast out demons in Your name, and do many mighty works in Your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.’ (Matthew 7:21–23) ESV

People may deceive themselves but the Lord is not deceived, and He knows those who are truly His. The light of Jesus will expose all of those who are false.

- Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His” (2 Timothy 2:19) NKJV
- Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. (1 Corinthians 4:5) NKJV

Matthew 25:30

- And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ (Matthew 25:30) NKJV

This verse does not teach that a believer can fail to be profitable, or fail to have a sufficient level of performance, and therefore be cast into the outer darkness.

In fact, this verse is from the parable of the three servants (Matthew 25:14-30), which comes right after the parable of the ten virgins, and it includes a similar principle.

The unprofitable servant was among the servants, and had the appearance of being a servant, but was not a genuine servant himself.

Genuine believers realize their Lord is loving and gracious and good and true. However, the unprofitable servant believed his lord to be harsh and accused him of dishonesty.

- “Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. (Matthew 25:24) NKJV

The unprofitable servant had the clothing of a servant, but later was exposed as being false. He is representative of someone who wears sheep’s clothing, but was never converted to a true sheep, and therefore will be expelled by the holy and righteous Shepherd.

- Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. (Matthew 7:15–16) NKJV

Hebrews 6:4-6

- For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. (Hebrews 6:4–6) NKJV

This passage is hard to understand, and there is much debate on how it should be properly understood.

Those who teach that someone can lose their salvation, usually teach that they can get it back if they “repent”, however the underlined parts above would make that view impossible.

You can be sure that based on the clarity of Scripture as a whole, this passage does not teach that a believer can lose their salvation, and it is teaching something else.

Ezekiel 18:24

- But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die. (Ezekiel 18:24) NKJV

The passage above, and also a similar passage in Ezekiel 33, do not teach that a believer can eternally die due to unfaithfulness or sin.

Ezekiel may be referring to a judgment of physical death due to sin. A believer can physically die but will still have eternal life.

Or Ezekiel may be referring to someone under the law. Through faith in Christ, believers are made free from the law, and therefore made free from eternal death due to sin.

- For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. (Romans 8:2) NKJV

As mentioned previously, believers are not under the law, but under grace.

- For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. (Romans 6:14) NKJV

Due to being under grace, a believer can never be condemned to eternal death because of sin.

- Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1) NASB

5. Assurance of Salvation

It is very important for a believer to have assurance that their salvation is secure in Christ. Doubt and fear about one's salvation will cause distraction and emotional distress.

There are two keys to having assurance:

1. Make sure that you have believed the Biblical message of salvation (this is discussed in more detail in the last chapter of this booklet).
2. If you have believed the Biblical message of salvation, then rest on the authority of God's word (this is discussed in more detail in this chapter in the following section).

Rest on the Authority of God's Word

Below is a very valuable verse for this subject matter.

- Your word is truth. (John 17:17) NKJV

God's word, and God's word alone, determines truth. Here are some examples of things that do NOT determine truth:

feelings, emotions, desires
beliefs, thoughts, experiences
impressions, promptings, urgings
dreams, visions, NDEs, angels
supernatural experiences, events, and signs
behavior, performance, works
good or bad things that happen or don't happen to us

Many of the things above can be helpful at times. However, many of these things will lie to us and fail us often, because they can be from sources that are not trustworthy, such as ourselves, the world, or deceiving spirits. Our trust should not be in these things, but in the word of God. God's word will never lie, and His word will never fail.

- The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever. (Psalm 119:160) NKJV
- "And now, O Lord GOD, You are God, and Your words are true (2 Samuel 7:28) NKJV
- Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. (Matthew 24:35) NKJV
- Not one thing has failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed. (Joshua 23:14) NKJV

Since they could be from deceiving spirits, supernatural messages or activity should be tested against the word of God.

- Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 John 4:1) NKJV
- If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. (Isaiah 8:20) NKJV

For believers to be assured of our salvation, we should simply look to what has been revealed to us in God's word, and look away from all else.

Believers are in Christ, and God does not see us or deal with us according to our failures, but according to the perfect and blameless righteousness of Christ. Our salvation is secure in Him!

- He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. (Psalm 103:10) ESV
- Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. (Ephesians 1:3–6) NKJV

God's promises are Yes for believers in Jesus.

- For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. (2 Corinthians 1:20) NKJV

We should not look to our performance or anything else about ourselves, so that we can think that we are saved.

We should look to Jesus, so that we can know that we are saved!

The Lord Jesus did all that was necessary for salvation!

We should examine ourselves to make sure that our faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ and not in anyone or anything else.

- Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:1–2) NKJV

When our eyes are off of Jesus, doubts will flood in. Look away from all else! Look to Jesus! That is how we may know that we have eternal life!

- These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life (1 John 5:13) NKJV

6. Behavior & Works Matter

Good behavior or good works do not cause an unbeliever to gain salvation, and bad behavior or bad works do not cause a believer to lose salvation.

Salvation is entirely through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

However, behavior and works do matter.

After a believer is saved, good behavior and good works are valuable and important for a variety of reasons, such as:

1. Love for the Lord and thankfulness for His grace
2. For unhindered prayers and fellowship with God
3. Joy and peace, and the other fruits of the Spirit
4. Our purpose as witnesses and ambassadors
5. Avoiding the consequences of sin, such as:
 - a. Darkness and deception
 - b. Damaged testimony to others
 - c. Hurting self and others
 - d. Possible loss of some rewards
 - e. Possible physical death

Because of the dramatic changes that God makes to a believer in conversion, as discussed earlier in this booklet, a genuine believer

should have transformation in their life, which should eventually be reflected in good behavior and good works, or in other words, good fruit.

Also, the more we realize what God has done for us, and how great God's forgiveness is for us, the more we will love Him, and that love should help motivate us toward good behavior and works.

- Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." (Luke 7:47) NKJV

However, we cannot set a "measure" or "level" or "standard" for works or behavior or fruit in order to "prove" if we or someone else is saved or not.

The following three sections in this chapter will discuss some Scripture passages that are harder to understand. They are sometimes used incorrectly to teach that a believer can lose their salvation, or that certain works are required in order to have salvation. As previously mentioned, it is important to interpret the harder to understand passages in the light of clear passages.

Not Forgive, Not Forgiven

Based on the passage below from Matthew, some wrongly teach that a believer can lose their salvation if they fail to forgive.

- For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matthew 6:14–15) NKJV

The passage above can be viewed from two different perspectives.

Perspective #1

Unforgiveness is a sin, and has consequences, just like any other sin. However, for a believer, this sin, and all other past, present, and future sins, have been washed away by the blood of Jesus.

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood (Revelation 1:5) NKJV

A believer who has unforgiveness in their heart will suffer the consequences, but will not lose their salvation.

One help in understanding the Matthew 6 passage above, is the passage below which is a few chapters later.

- And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. “So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.” (Matthew 18:34–35) NKJV

From the passage above, we can see that when someone does not forgive, they will experience the day to day suffering of mental and physical torture, and will lose the day to day experience of the peace of His forgiveness.

There could also be other possible consequences for unforgiveness, such as loss of some rewards.

Another help in understanding this passage is the clarity of Scripture as a whole. Forgiveness is indeed a good work, however Scripture clearly testifies that salvation is by God’s grace through faith alone, and not by works. Therefore, we can see that unforgiveness will not cause a believer to lose their salvation.

Perspective #2

Since forgiveness is a reflection of God’s character, if one has unforgiveness in their life, it may be an indication that they were never saved to begin with, and therefore do not have God’s Spirit in their life.

A person with unforgiveness should examine whether they have truly acknowledged their own sinfulness and truly put their trust in the eternal forgiveness purchased through Jesus' blood alone.

The Book of James

Based on some passages from the book of James, such as the ones below, some wrongly teach that works are required for salvation.

- Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. (James 2:17) NKJV
- But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? (James 2:20) NKJV
- For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (James 2:26) NKJV

God's word does not contradict itself, and so we remember that we need to interpret the harder to understand passages in the book of James in the light of the clear passages of Scripture.

There are many clear passages that teach that salvation is by faith alone, and not by works. Below are just a few of them.

- Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. (Galatians 2:16) NKJV
- But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, (Romans 4:5) NKJV
- For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8–9) NKJV

Therefore, we know that the book of James cannot be teaching that works are required for salvation.

It seems that James is teaching that works demonstrate genuine faith. It is by faith alone that one receives salvation, and it appears that James is using the word “justified” in the sense that works show the reality of one having truly received salvation.

- You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. (James 2:24) NKJV
- I will show you my faith by my works. (James 2:18) NKJV

Repeating the Ephesians passage here, but adding verse 10 this time, we see that works are not for salvation, but come after salvation.

- For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8–10) NKJV

As mentioned previously, a believer receives dramatic changes from God at conversion, and so works should eventually be manifested as a result. However, this happens in different ways and degrees and timings with different believers.

However, if sin is rampant in our lives, or if we sin freely without conviction, or if we have not witnessed any transformation, or demonstration of faith in our lives, we should examine ourselves to see if we have genuinely acknowledged our sinfulness and genuinely believed the gospel message.

The Bible has multiple warnings about false profession of faith, or fake “believers”, including the two passages below.

- To the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work. (Titus 1:15–16) ESV

- For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. (Jude 4) NKJV

A genuine believer will have the transforming and convicting work of the Holy Spirit, and even though a genuine believer may fail many many times, a genuine believer will war and battle and struggle against sin.

- For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. (Galatians 5:17) ESV
- I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! (Romans 7:22–25) NKJV

To further clarify the teaching of James, we will now look at the example of Abraham.

Abraham was saved by faith

Below is a passage about Abraham from the book of James.

- Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? (James 2:21–22) NKJV

Paul uses Abraham as an example of being saved by faith, therefore James could not be using Abraham as an example of being saved by faith plus works. God's word is not contradictory, and Abraham could not have been saved two different ways.

- What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” (Romans 4:1–3) NKJV

In fact, Abraham was saved by faith around 20 or more years before offering Isaac on the altar.

- And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. (Genesis 15:6) NKJV

Abraham’s genuine faith was eventually demonstrated in that difficult act of obedience, many years AFTER he was already saved.

The only way that salvation can be sure, is when it is wholly of God’s grace through faith, apart from works. Abraham was saved by faith alone, and is a good example for us.

- Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (Romans 4:16) NKJV

Sheep & Goats

Matthew chapter 25, regarding the judgment of the sheep and goats, is sometimes incorrectly used to teach that works are required for salvation.

- Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ (Matthew 25:34–36) NKJV
- “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil

and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ (Matthew 25:41–43) NKJV

However, this is probably best understood as being similar to the teaching in the book of James.

It is important to note that the sheep and goat judgment is referring specifically to Christ’s judgment of those remaining on the earth at His second coming at the end of the tribulation.

The tribulation will be a terrible time, with extreme persecution against Christians and Jews. This judgment appears to indicate that the faith of genuine believers in the tribulation will be manifested, or demonstrated, in some way and some degree to the physical and/or spiritual help of Jews, Christians, and those who will become Christians. One example of spiritual help is feeding the spiritually hungry with the spiritual food of God’s word.

- Man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. (Deuteronomy 8:3) NKJV
- “Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord GOD, “That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the LORD. (Amos 8:11) NKJV

When Christ returns, He will setup His kingdom on the earth. The sheep and goat judgment will determine who will be blessed to continue into His kingdom, and who will be cursed with everlasting punishment. From the verse below, we see that the sheep are the ones who will inherit the kingdom.

- Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: (Matthew 25:34) NKJV

And in the passages below, we clearly see that inheritance comes through faith.

- To open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' (Acts 26:18) NKJV
- When you cry out, let your collection of idols deliver you. But the wind will carry them all away, a breath will take them. But he who puts his trust in Me shall possess the land, and shall inherit My holy mountain." (Isaiah 57:13) NKJV

It is faith in Christ that saved the sheep, and lack of faith that condemned the goats. Not the presence or absence of works.

To close this chapter, it is important to note that even though works can demonstrate genuine faith, works do not prove genuine faith. A person can do all sorts of works without being a true believer, such as was discussed in the "God's Sheep" section of the "God's Conversion of a Believer" chapter.

7. Regarding Water Baptism

Water baptism is a good thing that a believer should do as a public expression of their faith.

However, being baptized in water does not contribute to salvation in any measure, and not having water baptism will not cause a believer to miss out on salvation. Salvation is in Jesus alone, not in Jesus plus something else.

One of the criminals who were crucified next to Jesus came to saving faith while he was on the cross, and did not have the opportunity to be baptized in water. However, Jesus showed that he was indeed saved because he would be with Jesus in Paradise.

- And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43) NKJV

Additionally, there are many others that the Bible mentions as being saved, without any mention of water baptism, such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David.

We should also distinguish between Spirit baptism and water baptism. All believers are Spirit baptized at the moment they believe. However, not all believers are water baptized.

- I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ (John 1:33) NKJV
- For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” (Acts 1:5) NKJV
- For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13) NKJV

Following are a few passages that are harder to understand, but they do not teach that water baptism is required in order to be saved.

As a reminder, we must interpret the harder to understand passages in the light of the clear passages

John 3:5

- Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:5) NKJV

Born of water does not refer to water baptism, but to everyone’s initial physical birth. However, people must be born again, by the Spirit, in order to be saved.

- That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ (John 3:6–7) NKJV

Mark 16:16

- He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. (Mark 16:16) NKJV

It is uncertain if this verse is referring to Spirit baptism, which happens to all believers at the moment of faith, or if it is referring to water baptism.

If it does refer to water baptism, it may be saying that water baptism is presumed to follow saving belief, but the water baptism itself does not contribute to the salvation.

Also, notice that the second part of the verse above shows that it is the lack of belief that brings about the condemnation of a person, not the lack of water baptism.

1 Peter 3:20-21

- God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:20–21) ESV

This passage draws a comparison between baptism and Noah's family going through water. However, it is important to note that Noah was saved by faith, not by the waters of the flood.

- By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. (Hebrews 11:7) NKJV

Noah was temporally saved by the ark, but eternally saved by faith. Peter may be saying that believers, who are already eternally saved, will be temporally saved from a bad conscience if they are baptized.

Acts 2:38

- And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38) ESV

The word “for” underlined above could mean that they should be baptized in water in order to obtain forgiveness, or it could mean that they should be baptized in water due to having been forgiven. Due to the context of the rest of Scripture, we know that the second meaning is the correct one.

Here is a helpful excerpt from the Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon:

“For” (as used in Acts 2:38 “for the forgiveness ...”) could have two meanings. If you saw a poster saying “Jesse James wanted for robbery”, “for” could mean Jesse is wanted so he can commit a robbery, or is wanted because he has committed a robbery. The later sense is the correct one. So too in this passage, the word “for” signifies an action in the past. Otherwise, it would violate the entire tenor of the NT teaching on salvation by grace and not by works.

8. How to Be Saved

God is infinitely holy and sin has a very serious eternal consequence.

To be saved, we need to acknowledge our sinfulness and put our trust in the only hope there is. That hope is Jesus Christ. He is God, whose absolute justice and wonderful love led Him to become a Man, and because He was without sin, He was able to endure the holy judgment of God in our place, and rise again victorious over sin and death.

A few examples of misplaced trust are: trusting in the “church” or another organization, trusting in attendance or services or ceremonies or rituals or confessions, trusting in being part of a “Christian family or nation”, trusting in law keeping or good works, trusting in “your good deeds outweighing your bad deeds”, trusting in comparing yourself to others who are “worse” than you, trusting

in being involved in ministry or charitable activities, trusting in a feeling or experience or life change that you had, trusting in a prayer that was said or in praying regularly, and trusting in the wrong “Jesus”.

The Lord Jesus did 100% of the work of salvation, and He paid 100% of the cost of salvation.

Salvation is a completely free gift that is received simply by confessing our sinfulness and trusting in Christ alone.

- Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions (Psalm 51:1–3) NKJV
- For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16) NKJV
- Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.” (John 6:28–29) NKJV
- For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8–9) NKJV
- And he brought them out and said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:30–31) NKJV

Yes, it is that simple. Here are a few Scriptures emphasizing the simplicity of the salvation message:

- And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. (1 John 5:11–12) NKJV

- Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. (John 6:47) NKJV
- But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. (2 Corinthians 11:3) NKJV

For those who have put their trust in Christ, there is a glorious future:

- Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away...And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:1–4) ESV

The message of salvation is indeed simple, but it is also helpful to gain a deeper understanding of that message and to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). Reading the Bible is immensely valuable, not only for learning about who God is and what He has done, and for growing in relationship with Him, but also for helping to avoid the many false teachings now and in the future.

For more detail on how the simplicity of the salvation message is taught through the whole Bible, please see the booklet titled "The Wonderful Salvation of God" which is available for free download in PDF format at WonderfulSalvation.com

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