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Getting Saved!!

At what point is a believer “Saved?”



*Drag your finger
or mouse LEFT
to flip the pages.*

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At What Point Is A Believer “Saved?”

*From those who're inclined to
always agree with me, I learn not much.
From those who rationally explain why
they disagree, I learn volumes.*

A preacher's kid, I grew up in church. After graduating from children's church, I was surprised to learn that we were to sing some of the same songs in our youth groups and then, too, in “big church.”

Yes, we adults continued singing songs of jubilation like “I'm saved and I know that I am!” and “I'll Fly Away!” It always amused me when the adults would sing children's songs like “Jesus Loves Me.” It amused me, but I still enjoyed the nostalgia.

During my teenaged years I became progressively less certain that I was “saved.” Why? Because I was keenly aware of all the dirt God had on me. Inside, I felt like a dirty rotten rat most of the time. “Saved” people don't feel like that inside; I was sure of it. But there were times of respite: I would “get ‘saved’” all over again with every new revival and super preacher¹ evangelist who'd come to our church.

¹ Paul called them “super apostles” in the KJV. (See 2 Corinthians 11:5.)

Each of those revivalists would confirm my suspicion that I had clearly backslidden and was in need of a brand new dose of God's merciful saving grace. I observed my teenaged friends going through cycles that were strikingly similar. And I wondered about the adults...what about the adults? I mean, hey! I knew the not-behind-the-pulpit version of my dad! When my interest turned to learning everything I could about the human female anatomy, my desire to “stay ‘saved’” began to fade. I was fully obsessed.

A buddy and I decided to skip a Sunday morning service to raid an adjacent back yard's fruit trees. One of the church deacons caught us and slipped a note to the pastor (not my dad, at that point) who dragged us before the really large Sunday morning congregation to confess.

Our lesson? We learned that while it can be lots of fun to be bad, it feels really awful when you get caught at it. So we resolved never to get caught again. But if we were to get caught...well, we'd just deal with that, too, you know? Such power!

When the pastor announced another revival, my buddy and I immediately knew that the new super preacher would pour bucketloads of conviction on us. At some point during the next week my buddy asked me if I remembered that King David, a man after God's own heart, had done some stuff a lot worse than anything he and I had done. "David 'got saved' again," he said, "and he even got to keep that hot rooftop sunbathing babe, Bathsheba!" Vivid, full color moving pictures of that story dominated my consciousness again for weeks!



My buddy “got ‘saved’” again during that new revival. I sat back. In spite of the David-Bathsheba story, it seemed hypocritical to me to repent when my intent was to continue catering to my carnal consciousness.

So who was right? Me or my buddy?

His dad was one of the church leaders, so he had also grown up “in church.” He and I were typical of the teenagers, in that we had learned a lot about “what ‘we’ believe” but had gained little understanding and knowledge about what God’s written word might have to say about “what ‘we’ believe.” I discovered later that few, if any, of the adults in that large church had gained such knowledge.

How could that have been? Is it still the observable rule today? Had our preachers (including my dad) intentionally kept their trusting faithful flocks “in the dark?” If so, had they done that on purpose? Is it even possible that they didn’t know any better, themselves?

I was able to ask my dad about all that before he died. He convinced me that pastors do not keep the trusting faithful “in the dark” intentionally. After extensive further analysis I concluded that most of them are just as uninformed and/or misinformed and delusional as their parishioners.

But...but...but...surely they’ve done their basic homework, at least! Well, haven’t they?

The culprit is subtle...and barely detectable: Again, every denomination has its own “what ‘we’ believe” franchise. Every seminary teaches its students what to study, *to confirm* “what ‘we’ believe.” Seminary professors hold one another accountable to “what ‘we’ believe.” Isn’t that amazingly similar to brilliant scientists who hold one another accountable to the “climate change” narratives *du jour* that are prescribed by those who keep those generous grants flowing?

Would you be surprised if that were to work differently? Then you may also know that peer pressure among adults is much stronger than it is among children. It is even stronger for adults who get paid to toe-the-line. Golden

handcuffs. Might that be at least part of what Paul had in mind, given his well-documented concern that, if “the ministry” were ever to become a career choice (i.e.: a profession), it would become fully corrupt?

Well, today’s professional clergy may not be fully corrupt, but Jesus listed some of the inevitable characteristics of many of them. Observable today?—

*But all their works
they do for to be seen of men:
they make broad their phylacteries,
and enlarge the borders of
their garments, and love the
uppermost rooms at feasts, and
the chief seats in the synagogues,
and greetings in the markets...
whosoever shall exalt himself
shall be abased; and he that
shall humble himself
shall be exalted.*

Matthew 23:
5-12

The elitist mindset that drives such behaviors may be subconscious for many...still easy to observe, though.

Back, now, to the ongoing dialog with my teenaged buddy...and “what ‘we’ believe.”

We attended schools on opposite sides of town. He approached me one Sunday night with this: “Some of my friends at school say that after you ‘get saved’ you can never ever backslide!”

Although he and I had been discussing that “backsliding” thing off-and-on for weeks, my internal reaction was, “If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.” Is it true? Is it too good to be true? Well, yes...but maybe no!

The Bible answer to that question is probably going to surprise you. It has already shocked some of my correspondents who had been aligned with either of the two wild and crazy extremes of Salvation theology—and even some who were “on the fence.” While you prepare your mind and heart for some critical new insight, take comfort in this:

*Blessed [are] they which
do hunger and thirst
after righteousness:
for they shall
be filled.*
Mat. 5:6

He could easily have said, “Blessed are the righteous!” Whew! Loophole!

So let’s explore those wild and crazy extremes of “Getting ‘Saved’” theology. Troubling confusion about that is beyond abundant.

We hope to help you and all the people you love resolve that confusion forever. There are multiple points of interest for us to unravel. This can be a heavy undertaking, so we’ve worked to keep the narratives reader-friendly and even lighthearted, when that’s possible. (You haven’t noticed that, have’ya? Yeah; right!)

How do *real* people respond to what people they love and respect have taught them about “Getting ‘Saved’?” The short story that follows may be our best option for answering that question so that you may never forget it. It may also be the most effective way for you to understand how utterly ridiculous those extreme theories are.

A lovely gal caught the eye of a handsome guy in a big city nightclub. He was consuming moderate amounts of alcohol, but her drink was Perrier® on the rocks. They talked and listened to the live band for the first few minutes.

Then they danced for quite a while. They were very attracted to one another, emotionally and physically.

He invited her to join him for a Perrier® in the lounge of the luxurious hotel where he was lodging while in town on business.

“I came here with a girlfriend, so you’ll have to take me home afterward, okay?”

He agreed.

It was a piano lounge and the pianist was also a singer, a genuine talent. Our pretty young lady was really impressed. “I’ve lived here all my life but have never seen the inside of this hotel. It’s gorgeous!”

Our handsome young business guy was pleased.

The pianist/singer took a break and our lovely gal took the last sip of her Perrier® and then excused herself to the ladies’ room.

She returned and, having also finished his Perrier®, the guy said, “Hey! I’ve got an idea!”

“Oh? What’s that?”

“You’ve always wanted to see the inside of this hotel, so that means you have never seen one of the rooms! In my travels, I’ve never slept in a more luxuriously appointed room! Wanna see it?”

“Sure! Let’s!”

...

Okay; we don’t have to tell you how that fateful night played out. You know. At some point, she said, “I’ve gotta be home by 8:00.” He didn’t think to ask why until they had almost overslept:

“Why 8:00?”

“Today’s Sunday. I’ve got to teach Sunday School for my high school girls.”

“You’re a Sunday School teacher? Dang! How do you reconcile that with what we’ve been doing all night?”

“It’s like I teach the girls in my class: Jesus loves us unconditionally. He died on the cross to forgive us of all our sins—past, present and future!”

“Wow! At my church, I’m considered a backslider!” I have to get saved, again, every once in a while, especially when we get a new revival preacher.”

“I’ve heard about those churches. I think that might cheapen the value of my salvation experience. How does it affect you?”

“Well, I just know if I’m not living right when I die, I’ll go straight to Hell.”

“Our preacher tells us a lot about that doctrine in his sermons. He says it’s from a guy named Arminius or something like that. We follow the John Calvin doctrines. Both of those guys lived in the 16th Century, I think.”

“I’ve heard our preacher mention John Calvin, but I don’t recall ever having heard of that Arminius fellow.”

“Hey! Here’s where I live. Got just a few minutes to get ready for church. When’ll you be back in town?”

“Next month, I think.”

“Great! Maybe we can get together and talk some more!”

“Sure.”

“Bye; had fun.”

“Yeah; me too.”

“In religion and politics, people’s beliefs and convictions are in almost every case gotten at second hand, and without examination.”

Most folk who've been schooled on the antagonism that has long existed between Calvinism and Arminianism will initially presume this to be a continuation of that. It is not. The *experts* in both of those camps continue to miss a critical point: one that you'll discover here, soon enough.

You may be certain that Calvinism and Arminianism are **THE WILD EXTREMES** of the “getting ‘saved’” message. Millions of very sincere folk will be really, really angry on Judgment Day. Their anger will be directed at their preachers, but God will hold each of them personally accountable for making sure he is aligned with the 1st Century gospel message regarding the truth about “getting ‘saved’.”

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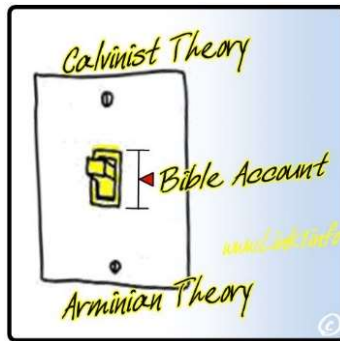
10:00 AM, Sunday: Our lovely gal is engaged in dialog with her high school girls' Sunday School class. A couple of the girls had recently heard that smoking and drinking are sin.

Our lovely teacher's reply was “Well, you know those things certainly aren't good for you and, yes, I think those practices are sinful, but Jesus' love for us is unconditional, so they won't send you to Hell or anything like that. I learned a long time ago that you don't have'ta smoke and drink to have fun; okay?”

Noted.

Our young business guy is still amazed that he had just spent the night with a Sunday School teacher. Cognitive dissonance is sure to dominate his leisure-time thinking for a really long time. Will he call her when he's back in town? Maybe. Maybe not...

Whether you grew up “in church” or became a believer as an adult, it's almost certain that you've been instructed either in the Salvation theories of John Calvin (1509-1564) or of Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609). You may also suspect that there are variations in each of those extreme theories. There are. Some are less extreme but others are even more extreme.



The following thumbnail sketches of them may be over simplified but, here, we intend to keep it simple for you so as not to send you into a tailspin with theological terminology and detail. At any rate, you may find these initial introductions to be helpful...

Initially, you're likely to disagree with some of what follows, no matter which of those theories you're currently aligned with. You'll want to consider reading Acts 17:11 in several Bible versions to get a grasp on your pivotal options.

— **“Calvinism”** —

The essence of it is that
a believer must get “Truly
‘Saved’” just once in order to
“go to Heaven” upon his death
and that he can never lose his
resulting “eternal Salvation,”
no matter what he may say,
think or do afterward.

— **“Arminianism”** —

The essence of it is this:
A believer must be “Saved”
at the point of his death in order
to “go to Heaven,” but that he
can “get ‘Saved’” and then
lose his Salvation if he
reverts to a sinful
lifestyle.

What follows is Paul's description of two groups of people who, upon hearing the Gospel message for the first time, were extremely skeptical. Why? It was substantially different from what people they loved and respected had taught them about God and about the holy scriptures.

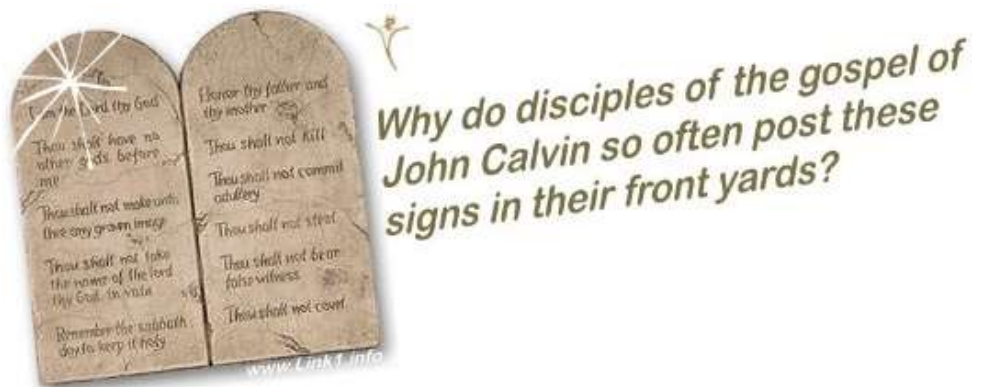
*Now the Bereans were of
more noble character than the
Thessalonians, for they received the
message with great eagerness
and examined the Scriptures
every day to see if what
Paul said was true.*

Acts 17:11_{NIV}

The first group left and took their blissful skepticism with them. The other group, went home and studied their own scriptures...to find out whether there just might be some Truth in what they had just heard. Their initial skepticism quickly vanished. The apostle, Paul, described that group as “more noble.” Our prayer is that YOU will opt for such nobility.

LAW v. GRACE—

That is among the critical issues about which the “experts” in the extreme camps continue to argue. It's a heated argument. Curiously, though, rank-and-file adherents to each of those extreme theories want “The Ten Comments” to be posted prominently in their courthouses and other government buildings. And they often post those signs on their front lawns.



Calvinists are often heard to insist, “We’re not under law; we’re under Grace!” In response, Arminians often smile and mention Jesus’ “not one jot nor tittle” proclamation at Matthew 5:18. They may also cite the big **IF**s that appear frequently in New Testament salvation-related scriptures; e.g.:

“For **IF** ye live after
the flesh, ye shall die: but
IF ye through the Spirit
do mortify the deeds
of the body, ye
shall live.”

That’s Romans 8:13. Paul wrote it to church people; not to unbelievers. Hmmm...

Arminians appear to always be ready to drop the “Even devils believe!” bomb, at James 2:19.

Calvinists sometimes break into hearty laughter when they’re reminded that Arminians think they must “get ‘saved’” again when they “backslide.”

Human nature (i.e.: the Sin nature) forces even the sincere folk in both camps to argue and debate such issues. Objective collaboration might bring consensus for those who would forcibly remove those debilitating sectarian blindfolds from their eyes.



Later, we’ll disclose just how clear and easy-to-understand the pertinent scriptures are. But how can we be sure that the Righteous Judge won’t look at us on Judgment Day and say, “Go away! I never knew you!”?

Jesus knew that question would burn within those of us who seek Truth. He answered it specifically in the two quotes that follow. His *Depart from me!* command is to all who work iniquity. But the Greek words the KJV translators rendered, iniquity, are different, as you will see.

Adherents to one of those extreme Salvation theories insist that, once you have gotten “saved,” all you have to do is believe! Many people have (often subconsciously) bought-in to an even more extreme version of that: “Even if you stop believing, you can never lose your Salvation.”

Such unfortunate fantasy fools the uninformed and misinformed...

Example #1—

- ✓ “Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that **DOETH** the will of my Father which is in heaven...And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work **INIQUITY**^{G-458}.” —Matthew 7:21-23

^{G-458} from the N.T. Greek word that is transliterated, *anomia*. Per Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, it is used to indicate “the condition of without **LAW** because ignorant of it;...violating it; contempt and violation of **LAW**; wickedness.”

Per Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, it is “the condition of one without **LAW**, —either because ignorant of it, **or** because violating it.”

Example #2—

- ✓ “Then said one unto him, Lord, **ARE THERE FEW THAT BE SAVED?** And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us... But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all [ye] workers of **INIQUITY**^{G-93}. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth...” —Luke 13:23-28

^{G-93} The KJV word, “iniquity,” here, is from the transliterated N.T. Greek word, *adikia*. Per Strong’s, it is used to indicate “injustice, of a judge;

unrighteousness of heart and life; a deed violating **LAW** and justice, act of unrighteousness.”

Per Thayer's Greek Lexicon, it is “injustice, of a judge; unrighteousness of heart and life;...deceit which unrighteousness uses;...spec. unrighteousness by which others are deceived...”

It is a heart-felt faith we enjoy, for sure. But we're to follow Jesus' example of **DOING** and **THINKING**; not how He *felt* while here. Never did He permit his feelings to interfere with his thinking. He chose objectivity over subjectivity. A study of His post-wilderness experience temptations will leave you with no question about that: Matthew 4:1-14.



Several scriptures tell us to put on the **MIND** of Christ. Not even one instructs us to put on His heart. The only way we can come to understand God is to diligently seek Him. That is done via an ongoing, prayerful, fully-engaged **STUDY** of His written Word. (See 2 Timothy 2:15 and Hebrews 11:6.) Passive Christianity can be comfortable, but passivity won't “get it” for'ya!

Most believers apparently seek only *The Warm Fuzzies*. That makes them easy prey for those who seek followers and followers' dollars...who dispense

sugar-coated versions of the Gospel message of Salvation. Paul said that those naive believers are babies, only able to tolerate scriptural *milk*.

- ✓ “The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it?” —Jeremiah 17:9
- ✓ “How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?...and fools hate KNOWLEDGE?” —Proverbs 1:22
- ✓ “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool...” —Proverbs 28:26
- ✓ “My people are destroyed for lack of KNOWLEDGE. because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee...” —Hosea 4:6
- ✓ “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Is’ra-el is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to KNOWLEDGE...” —Romans 10:1,2



Nobody – not even one person – ever “got ‘saved’” in the 1st Century.

When they heard and believed the gospel message, they confessed their sinful lifestyles and repented of them. To repent is to resolve to abandon any sinful lifestyle and to **ACTIVELY** (not passively) **FOLLOW** Christ.

At what point in church history did people start “getting ‘saved’?”

Our Link1™ Bible Research Team has been unable to discover even one example of people “getting ‘saved’” before **the early 19th Century**. The now-pervasive “altar calls” and that “getting ‘saved’” phenomenon were the clever invention of overzealous, early-19th-Century preachers (salesmen at heart) who perceived the need for a couple of new tools with which to “close the sale.”

The now-popular “**sinner’s prayer**” thing also started early in the 19th Century. To begin to understand why that specific timing is significant, you’ll want to read our **Why 1830?** FlipBook. It’s next in this series. Look for it at <https://www.link1.info/flipbooks>.

Meanwhile, there is this: From the mid-1800s until now, the oft-unspoken but easy-to-observe primary mission of the visible church has been “to get people ‘saved’.” You may’ve noticed that most Sunday sermons are actually “salvation” sermons, creatively repackaged and delivered to BELIEVERS – who have heard it hundreds of times.

Might that be a problem? Well, yes: The Great Commission has nothing at all to do with “getting people ‘saved’” or anything else that might resemble that:

- ✓ The NKJV, the NLT, the NIV, the ESV, the HCSB, the NASB, the NET, the RSV, the ASV, the YLT, the DBY, the RVR60 and the Interlinear texts all confirm that Jesus told us “to make DISCIPLES” of all those who have heard and believed the Gospel.

The making of Believers is the job of The Holy Ghost and HE does that in conjunction with our sharing of the Gospel message with all who ask.

—“Let your speech [be] always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” —Colossians 4:6

—“...[be] ready always to [give] an answer to every man that **ASKETH** you a reason of the hope that is in you...” —1 Peter 3:15

When people
ASK

“Let your speech [be] always with grace,
seasoned with salt, that ye may know how
ye ought to ANSWER every man.”

—Colossians 4:6

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“...[be] ready always to [give] an answer to every man that
ASKETH you a reason of the hope that is in you...” —1 Peter 3:15

Jesus only shared the important stuff with people who demonstrated that they
had “ears to hear.” When people have ears to hear, they ask questions to
which they want answers. When they did that, He answered them.

Both Peter and Paul taught their followers to wait until people
ASK, for the same reason. When amateur “evangelists”
try to “get people ‘saved’,” those people react to
them like they react to pushy salespeople.

The observable result of the visible church’s substantially erroneous mission focus is that our church buildings are filled (often to overflowing) with Believers; not Disciples. Big difference!

Believers may be “Sitting On The Premises,” but they’re stereotypically passive in their christianity. Most subconsciously think they’re paying their professional christians to do all their Bible studying and critical thinking – and “the ministry” – for them. Their scriptural diet is Sunday morning *milk*.

Growing up is a choice we must each make...or not make.

DISCIPLES learn to...

DISCIPLINE themselves for meaningful **PRODUCTIVITY** within the community of faith. Believers, then, are...well, kind’a-sort’a like the devils who believe and tremble. Paul said they’re babies who can only tolerate *milk*.

Do you know someone who thinks Disciples can be made from pulpits or in classrooms? Perhaps they'd be willing to demonstrate that amazing feat by assembling a bunch of young kids in a classroom and trying to "teach" them how to ride their first bikes!



The making of Disciples is not a "preaching" or a "teaching" assignment. It's a COACHING assignment. But where are the coaches and who's helping those would-be coaches learn how to become effective discipleship coaches? "But we've always done it this way..."

*...whosoever he be of you
that forsaketh not all that he hath,
he cannot be my disciple.*

Luke 14:33

That sounds harsh, to be sure, but Jesus said it. Sounds like **PASSIVITY** is simply unacceptable! So how are we to respond? Perhaps we can learn from the apostle, Paul: He was convinced that a decision to follow Christ, is just the beginning of a race that must be aggressively run...all the way to the finish line!

Yes, it is quite true that Paul's assigned race was likely different from the one God has assigned to you. We think you can count on that. (Whew!)



Paul very clearly thought that
genuine belief in the Gospel message
must result in the aggressive running of a RACE
...and the FINISHING of an assigned course:
"I have fought a good fight, I have finished
[my] course, I have kept the faith."
—2 Timothy 4:7

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Jesus called our individual assignments “crosses.” Those are different for each of us. The street version of the take-home message is “Ya’gotta play the hand you were dealt.”

*And whosoever doth not
bear his cross, and come after me,
cannot be my disciple.*

Luke 14:27

At 2 Timothy 4:7-8, Paul said that the righteous judge will give him a crown of righteousness on “that day.” What day was he referencing? That’d be the one and only Judgment Day. The righteous judge will determine just how effectively we each have carried the cross He assigned to us. While we can’t be certain, we’re pretty sure that God won’t be giving out participation trophies then.

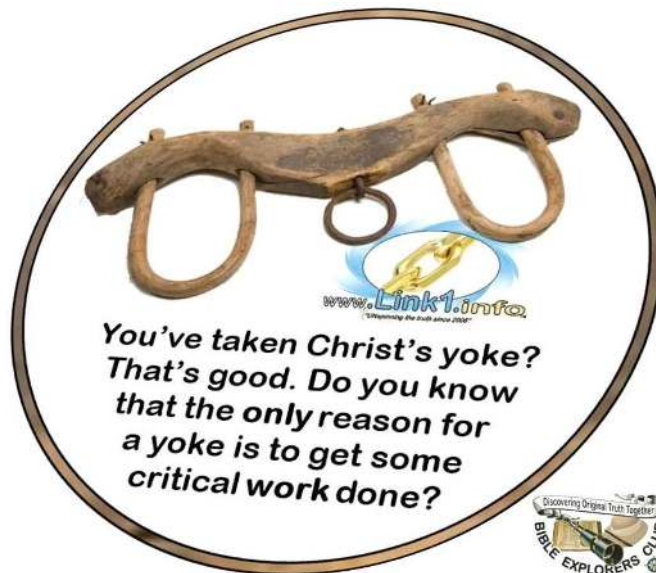
Christ’s Yoke?

*Take my yoke upon you, and
learn of me; for I am meek and
lowly in heart: and ye shall
find rest unto your souls.*

Matthew 11:29

Is that just a memory verse for children’s church or might it be a really serious command? If you grew up around farm animals, you already know that yokes are placed on the necks of two animals for the purpose of using the strength of them both for getting some critical work done. Might we safely conclude that that is the only purpose for Christ’s yoke?

Have you taken that yoke? If so, what kind of work do you think Christ expects from you? There’s a lot of misinformation afoot on that topic.



Here's our take on all this: The janitors and grass-cutters and nursery workers in the visible church will receive much greater rewards in Heaven than ANY of our paid professional christians, many of whom may already have received their reward. Yes, there's work to do, but it is beyond naive to think we can pay professional christians to do our work for us. "The ministry" is not, and never has been a *special* assignment for career professionals. Where it legitimately exists, it is simply a *different* assignment.



Why are so many preachers and their sectarian *superiors* fully convinced that they're "special?" Is it a conscious or sub-conscious conviction that they're *called and chosen* for "the ministry" and we are not? Nobody within Christ's body is special. Our assignments are different; nothing more. But wait! Who's at fault, here? We who behave as if professional christians are special are at fault. Gotta stop that foolishness!



Early on a Sunday morning, my wife and I watched a wildly popular Atlanta pastor on TV. His sermon was about the value of "kindness" as a mindset and a lifestyle. Made good sense, but something he said grabbed my attention. It was his comment on this verse:

*And grieve not
the Holy Spirit of God,
whereby **ye are sealed**
unto the day of
redemption.*

Ephesians
4:30

“If you are unkind or if you allow corrupt communication to proceed out of your mouth [v. 29] you will grieve the Holy Spirit, **by whom you are forever sealed.**”

Except that I’m doing my homework (i.e.: studying to become approved unto God, per 2 Timothy 2:15), that preacher’s *forever sealed* phrase would likely not have gotten my attention.

I recalled the extensive scholarly research and analysis of the Salvation scriptures by our Link1™ Bible Research Team. (There’s a hotlink to it on our Home page.) Among several other critical discoveries for us was this:

There are three (3) New Testament Greek words that the translators of the KJV rendered “seal,” “seals” or “sealed.” Just ONE (1) of them is defined by Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible as...

1. to cover with a seal
2. to close up
3. close with a seal

That transliterated N.T. Greek word, *katasphragizō*, is Strong’s **G-2696**. It appears **just ONCE** in the original New Testament texts, **at Revelation 5:1**; but not at Ephesians 4:30.

The Greek word that the KJV scholars translated, “sealed,” at Ephesians 4:30, 2 Corinthians 1:22 and Ephesians 1:3-14 is Strong’s **G-4972**, *sphragizō*. **“to MARK with a seal.”** A closely-related Greek word *sphragis*, **G-4973** (a noun) is defined by Strong’s like this:

1. the seal placed upon books

2. a signet ring
3. the inscription or impression made by a seal
4. the name of God and Christ stamped upon the foreheads of the elect...
[**for I.D. only**], as at Revelation 7:2,3
5. that by which anything is confirmed, proved, authenticated, as by a seal: **a token or proof**

When one makes Christ the Lord and Master of his life and his lifestyle he gets **A SEAL OF IDENTIFICATION** with Christ. Is he, then, “saved” for all eternity?

The identifying mark for those who continue to uphold their commitment to **follow** Christ is the Holy Spirit. That seal (i.e.: mark of identification with Christ and Christlikeness) is **our down payment** or first installment [KJV: “**EARNEST**”³] on our *future* inheritance of Salvation. (2 Corinthians 1:22, 5:5 and Ephesians 1:14 KJV)

³ In real estate, one who receives **EARNEST MONEY** will lose it if he fails to live up to his end of an agreement.



Aren't all those people who have preceded us in death either in Heaven or Hell? If there is just one Judgment (later), by what rationale might anybody be in Heaven or Hell today? Note: The *sons of God* at Genesis 6 *and after that* are bound in chains to await The Judgment, but they're not in Hell.

Remember where Jesus was for three days and three nights after He died on the cross? He was where those *sons of God* are. Jesus went there to let them know that He (not their commanding general, Satan) now has possession of the keys to that place! (See Matthew 12:40 for the location. See 1 Peter 3:19 for confirmation.)

He also went there to share the Gospel message with all the people who had *slept with their fathers* before His crucifixion—so that they might have the same chance as all the rest of us have, to choose or reject repentance unto Salvation:

*...the gospel [was] preached
also to them that are dead,
that they might be judged
according to men in the
flesh, but live according
to God in the spirit.*

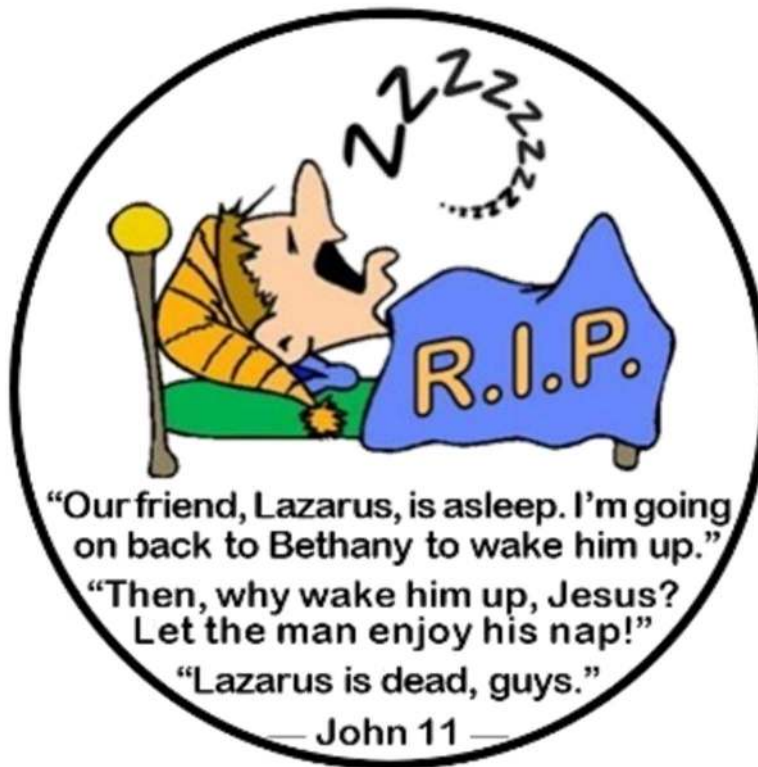
1 Peter 4:6

*...now [it is] high time
to awake out of sleep: for
now [is] our salvation nearer
than when we believed.*

Romans 13:11

Here's the essence of the truly fascinating dialog at John 11:11-14—

Why didn't He just tell them Lazarus was dead? Is it possible that He knew they had matured enough to start learning the truth about where good people *really* go when they die? There's no evidence that Lazarus spent those four days "in Heaven," you know. The Old Testament phrase, "**...slept with his fathers,**" is used to convey what we call death. From version-to-version of the Bible, that's beyond fairly consistent.



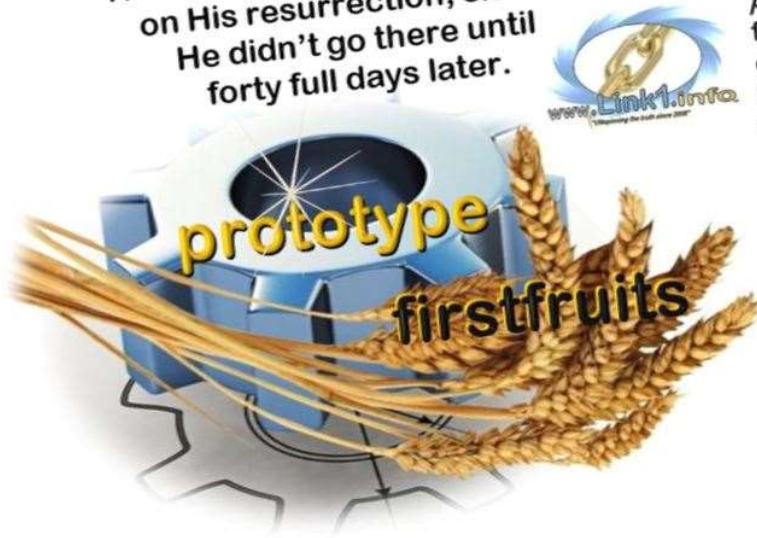
Jesus became the *firstfruits* (i.e.: the prototype) of all who are to experience physical death from the 1st Century on, per 1 Corinthians 15:20. He also became the *firstfruits* (the prototype) for our future Resurrection, per verse 23 in that same chapter. Please make a note—

When Jesus “gave up the ghost,” He didn’t go to Heaven. Where did He go? Jesus answered that question, Himself, at Matthew 12:40. He didn’t go to Heaven upon His resurrection, either—not until 40 days later. Those events are the prototypes for our own eventual death and/or Resurrection.

It’s almost certain that you’ve heard something very different. See our MicroShorts Memo, “Got Milk?” to learn the probable reason why you have heard something different: <https://www.Link1.info/microshorts>.

During those three days and three nights in “that other place,” Jesus preached to two groups: (a) “the captives” and (b) the souls/spirits of all those who had *slept with their fathers* prior to the 1st Century.

Where did Jesus go after He died on Calvary?
Not to Heaven. Instead, He spent three
days and nights somewhere else.
He didn't take a trip to Heaven
on His resurrection, either.
He didn't go there until
forty full days later.



"Firstfruits" refers to the 1st example
of others who are to follow. Jesus is also
called *the firstborn from among the dead*.
You can find that at Colossians 1:18 and
Revelation 1:5. "Firstborn" is the KJV
word that came from the Greek word,
prōtotos. We get our word "prototype"
from it. Jesus is clearly the prototype for
our own future Resurrection. He is the
first to die and rise again, never to die
again.

We who serve Him can anticipate the
sequences that He experienced upon His
death and the same sequences as upon
His resurrection. Only because we are to
receive those other-dimensional bodies
upon our own twinkling-of-an-eye change
(1 Corinthians 15:52) will we be able to
survive the catastrophic events that will
yield the new heavens and the new earth.
Our current flesh-and-blood bodies would
not be able to withstand the heat!

A former member of our Link1_{TM} Bible Research Team who briefly
aspired to tenure couldn't quite make the cut. During our initial series of
explorations into the topic of "getting 'saved'," that person could never get
beyond the clearly memorized question, "What sin is so terrible that it could
cause a person to lose his eternal salvation?" (Calvinist clergymen teach their
parishioners to memorize that.)

To that person, the question was legitimate. To several people in our
much larger Bible Discovery_{SM} group it was sensible, too. After all, something
eternal would be impossible to lose; wouldn't it? And sin is sin; isn't it? If
the wages of sin is_(sic) death, then one sin simply couldn't result in a more
severe form of death than another; could it?

Key to our initial series of discovery were these verses:

All things...are lawful
for me, but I will not be
brought under the
power of any.

1 Cor. 6:12

If we say that we
have no sin, we deceive
ourselves, and the truth is not in
us...If we say that we have not
sinned, we make him a liar,
and his word is not in us.

1 John 1:8,10

Collectively, our smaller research team came to paraphrase the essence of that first scripture like this: “I will not permit **ANY** of my sins to become a lifestyle.” That was to become a daily affirmation for each of us. For some, it continues today.

We concluded that “What sinful **LIFESTYLE** is so terrible that it could cause a person to lose his eternal salvation?” was an improvement. Still, no cigar, though:

We were hogtied by the realization that anything *eternal* simply can’t be lost! I will disclose how the scriptures, themselves, were to resolve that for us, below. For now, though, let’s cut to the “**sinful lifestyles**” chase.

The following passages were/are **addressed to CHURCH PEOPLE; not to unbelievers**. You will do well to keep that critical fact in mind as you read—

✓ Ten (10) sinful lifestyles that will preclude salvation^R

“Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that [your] brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor

covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.." —1 Corinthians 6:8-11

✓ One (1) sinful lifestyle that will preclude salvation^R

"It is reported commonly [that there is] fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife...To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. —1 Corinthians 5:1,5

✓ Four (4) sinful lifestyles that will preclude salvation^R

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." —Ephesians 5:5

✓ Eleven (11) sinful lifestyles that will preclude salvation^R

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth' fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience...But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth." —Colossians 3:5,6,8

✓ Eight (8) sinful lifestyles that will preclude salvation^R

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." —Revelation 21:8

✓ Six (6) sinful lifestyles that will preclude salvation^R

"Blessed [are] they that **DO** his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city...for without [are] dogs,^{G-2965} and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." —Revelation 22:14,15

^{G-2965} metaphor: "a man of impure mind, an impudent man," per Strong's

Any surprises, here?



Multiple New Testament scriptures list several specific sinful lifestyles that will clearly preclude Salvation. None of them are addressed to unbelievers. All of them are addressed to Church People. Given that fact, what would motivate someone to tell you that all you must do to be Saved is to Believe? Why would anyone try to convince you that once you've accepted Christ, you can never be unsaved?

TC

Among our surprises was the discovery that all Old and New Testament scriptures are consistent in the characterization of *Saved* as a **FUTURE** state, never PAST PERFECT or PRESENT PERFECT or even PRESENT PROGRESSIVE, as some choose to teach and millions of others choose to believe.

How the *experts* of the Calvinist and Arminian camps (both of them!) missed that glaring and easy-to-confirm Bible fact is anybody's guess! So how did our Link1_{TM} Bible Research Team discover it?

The youngest member of our Link1_{SM} team, Kyle Shed, was the catalyst for it: During one of our brainstorming sessions, he said something like, "This process would be a lot easier for us if we could just know the tenses and voices of the verbs and predicate phrases in those scriptures that each of the competing theologians cite."

For me, that was a major "Aha!" moment: I promptly remembered the seventh-grade English class where I learned exactly how that's done. I went

home and created a chart that was to guide us in accurately determining those tenses and voices.

While I was doing that, others of our team worked feverishly to collect all the scriptures that theological operatives in each of those extreme camps cite. Did we find them all? There may be a few more, but the collection is impressive!

On the surface (i.e.: before we had applied *The Basic Rules of Language* to objective analysis), many of those scriptures appeared to lend reasonable support to one or the other of the extreme views. But there can be no intelligent debate among those whose primary goal is to gain the objectively-derived truth about the promise of future eternal Salvation to those who **follow** Christ.

Want a copy of that scholarly research paper? There's a hotlink to it on our home page: <https://www.Link1.info>. No charge.

Because we know you're curious, here's a sneak preview:

At **John 3:16**,
the KJV word "**believeth**"
is in the **PRESENT PROGRESSIVE**
TENSE and the Active Voice.
Some sectarian "experts"
would have you believe
that it's in the PAST
PERFECT tense.

Not even remotely possible or
intelligently debatable!
Those guys clearly
didn't excel in
high school
or college
English.

Curiously, the Calvinist and Arminian “experts” both teach their followers that “Getting ‘Saved’” is an event! Calvinists perceive it as a once-upon-a-time event. Arminians treat it as an event that must be repeated often.

But, then, you know, those dumbed-down versions of the Gospel message sound *a lot more religious* than the 1st-Century version of it.

- ✓ “But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love and for an helmet, the HOPE of salvation (*a FUTURE PERFECT condition*).” —1 Thessalonians 5:8
- ✓ “But he that lacketh (*the fruits of the Spirit*) is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his OLD sins.” —2 Peter 1:9



You may now recall our lovely Sunday School teacher whose lifestyle included Saturday night *fun flings* who learned long ago that “Ya’just don’t have’ta smoke and drink ta’have fun. At some point, she said, “I’ve gotta be home by 8:00.” He didn’t think to ask why until they had almost overslept: “Why 8:00?”

“Today’s Sunday. I’ve got to teach Sunday School for my high school girls.”

“...a Sunday School teacher? Dang! How do you reconcile that with what we’ve been doing all night?”

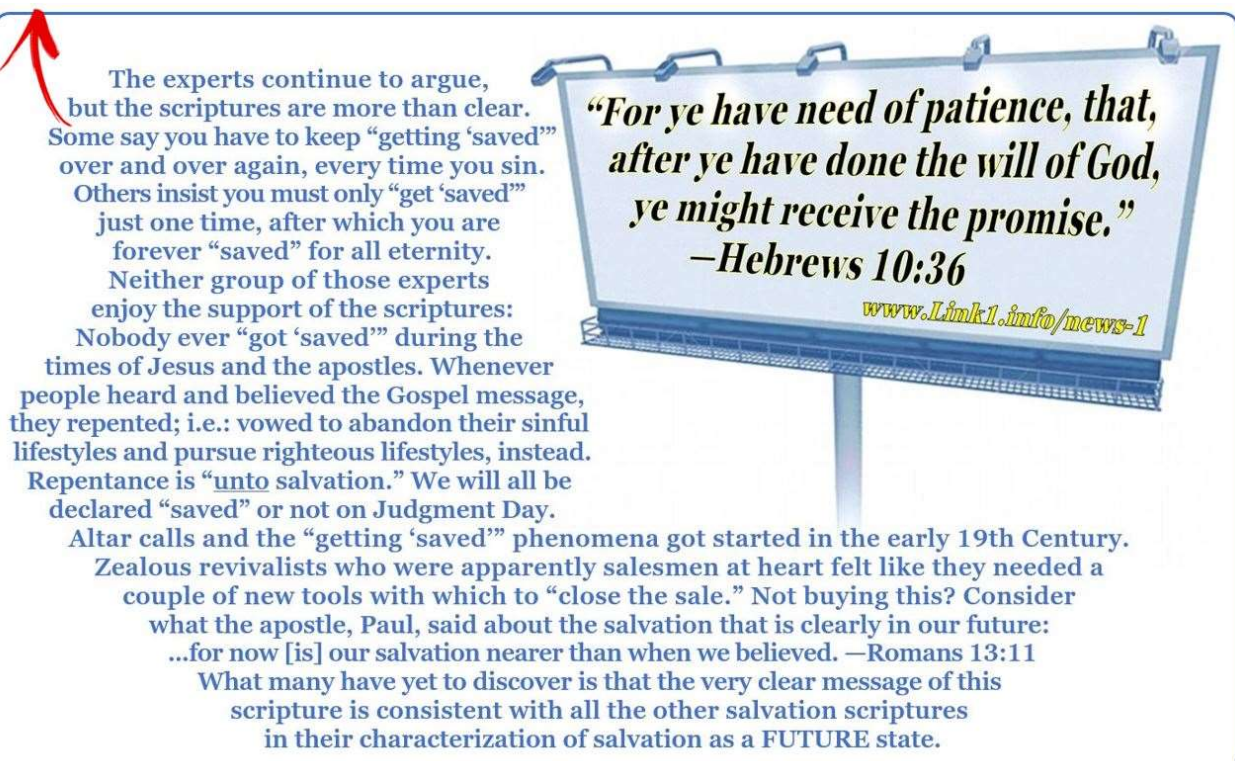
“It’s like I teach the girls in my class: Jesus loves us unconditionally. He died on the cross to forgive us for all of our sins—past, present and future!”

The abundantly clear Bible message is this: When a person yields to Christ as Lord and Master of his life and his lifestyle, he has taken **the first critical step on his journey toward FUTURE salvation.**

Given these scriptures and the warning at 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 11,12, millions of sincere folk who will have taken that first step will NOT complete the race that might have yielded eternal Salvation for them.

This is how Jesus described that scenario...

- ✓ “For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have [sufficient] to finish it? Lest, haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish [it], all that behold [it] begin to mock him, Saying, this man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, when the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.” —Luke 14:28-32



The experts continue to argue, but the scriptures are more than clear. Some say you have to keep “getting ‘saved’” over and over again, every time you sin. Others insist you must only “get ‘saved’” just one time, after which you are forever “saved” for all eternity. Neither group of those experts enjoy the support of the scriptures: Nobody ever “got ‘saved’” during the times of Jesus and the apostles. Whenever people heard and believed the Gospel message, they repented; i.e.: vowed to abandon their sinful lifestyles and pursue righteous lifestyles, instead. Repentance is “unto salvation.” We will all be declared “saved” or not on Judgment Day. Altar calls and the “getting ‘saved’” phenomena got started in the early 19th Century. Zealous revivalists who were apparently salesmen at heart felt like they needed a couple of new tools with which to “close the sale.” Not buying this? Consider what the apostle, Paul, said about the salvation that is clearly in our future: ...for now [is] our salvation nearer than when we believed. —Romans 13:11 What many have yet to discover is that the very clear message of this scripture is consistent with all the other salvation scriptures in their characterization of salvation as a FUTURE state.

“For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.”
—Hebrews 10:36
www.Link1.info/news-1

Hebrews 6 is the nemesis of all who claim otherwise. I once heard a renowned seminary theologian make a complete fool of himself while trying to teach a gathering of Calvinist pastors how to spin that.

Why not read Hebrews 6 and then Ezekiel 18:20-32 for confirmation. Keep in mind that the God of the Bible does not change.

- ✓ “...For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” —2 Corinthians 5:9,10

Jesus made it really clear that only those who are to **endure to THE END** will be saved. (Matthew 24:10-13 and Mark 13:13.) How must we define the word, “endure?” ...and “to the end” of what?

*...we are made partakers
of Christ, **IF** we hold the
beginning of our confidence
stedfast unto the end.*

Hebrews 3:14

Deby Boone made the following song lyrics famous in the late 1970s or early 1980s. They have become the virtual anthem of the 21st-Century visible church:

**“It can’t be wrong
when it *feels* so right!”**

That mindset is pervasive. That’s why it’s really hard to objectively reexamine the things people we love and respect have taught us about the Bible and Christianity.

Several scriptures tell us to put on the MIND of Christ. Not even one instructs us to put on His HEART—or his “feelings” either, for that matter.

- ✓ “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your **MIND**...” —Romans 12:2
(That’s a command; not something to pray about!)
- ✓ “Let this **MIND** be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”
—Philippians 2:5
- ✓ “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound **MIND**.” —2nd Timothy 1:7
- ✓ “...Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same **MIND**...” —1 Peter 4:1

Here’s the Old Testament version of it...

- ✓ “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool...” —Proverbs 28:26

So what remedy is there for a sincere believer with a sound mind who really wants to avoid passivity? Might it be this...?

“Study ^{G-4704} to shew thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth.” —2 Timothy 2:15 KJV

^{G-4704} *spoudazō*; Strong’s: “...do (give) diligence, be diligent (forward), endeavour, labour, study.”

But if you read most any other Bible version you have likely missed out on the significance of this strong admonition to believers who would gain God’s personal approval. It’s a confirmed fact that many of the newer versions are not translations, but rather paraphrases or commentaries. Why paraphrase the scriptures when the original languages are relatively easy to translate accurately?

Almost all of us Christian creatures of Human Nature (the Sin Nature) have latched-on to one of the multiple sectarian doctrines. When setting out to interpret the scriptures we are naturally inclined to the bias of the dogma with which we’re respectively aligned. Maybe it’s subconscious, but it’s still evil **Spin**. Here are five examples of such pertinent liberal “translations:”

- ☛ “Do your best ^{G-4704} to...” ESV; NIV; RSV; ASV
- ☛ “Make every effort ^{G-4704} to...” NET

- ☛ “Strive diligently^{G-4704} to...” DBY
- ☛ “Give diligence^{G-4704} to...” HNV
- ☛ “Study and do your best^{G-4704} to...” AMP

Sounds to us like an effort to prepare believers to expect **participation trophies** on Judgment Day: “Congrats! You tried!” or “Kudos to you for your sincerity!” or something like that?

That “Do your best!” one is classic, in that “real people” are likely to interpret it as a sanction for their **passivity**. That’s the current norm, you know.



There are allegorical³ passages in the Bible, but many of those who view the whole thing as allegorical may never “get it.” On the flip side of that are those who’ve decided that all scripture is straightforward with never any allegory or symbolism. Many of those folk will never “get it,” either.

³ “Allegorical” is the adjective form of the noun, “allegory.” Per the Mirriam-Webster Dictionary, “allegory” means “the expression by means of symbolic fictional figures and actions of truths or generalizations about human existence...”

How do real people respond to what people they love have taught them to believe about what the Bible says about “Getting ‘Saved’?” They respond a lot like our Saturday-night-fling-followed-by-Sunday-School couple from earlier in this narrative. These are among the reasons why that is observably true:

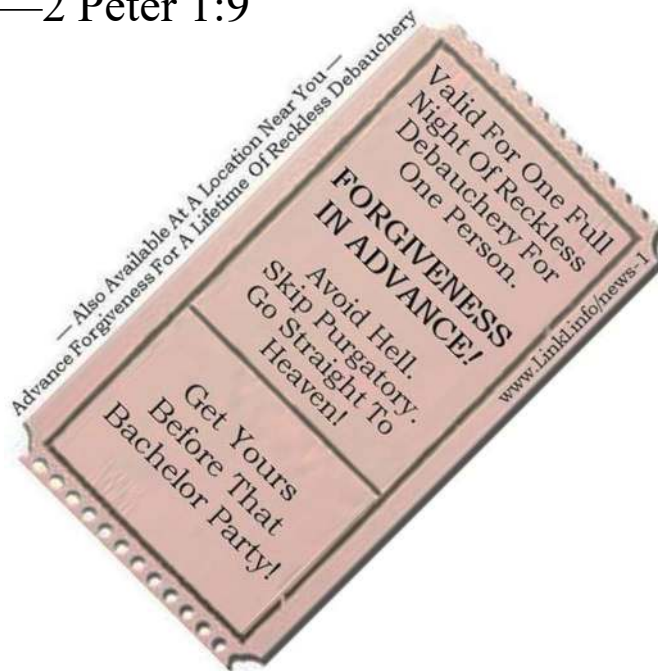
- ❶ Extremely few of those folk (professional or amateur) who presume to teach “what ‘we’ believe” have ever examined “what ‘we’ believe” objectively, for themselves.
- ❷ When “what ‘we’ believe” is presented as a forgone conclusion, the typical believer is afraid to question it...except in their often perplexed minds. Within the hearts and minds of many otherwise intelligent folk who fear the “Doubting Thomas” label with a passion, cognitive dissonance reigns.
- ❸ The masses, including churchgoers, are headline readers. They rarely grasp what follows a headline, except when it comes to things that entertain them. For example, those who regularly hear the Calvinist headline, “We’re not under Law; we’re under Grace!” are apt not to comprehend, “What then? shall we consciously sin because we’re not under the law...?” at Romans 6:15?
- ❹ Churchgoers love their preachers and teachers. It may be subconscious for most, but there’s the pervasive presumption that preachers and teachers are “called” and “chosen” and the rest of us are not—so they are our *superiors*.
- ❺ Real people are attracted to **FREE STUFF**, as observed in the current political climate. Passive church folk have invested their *Faith Equity*_{SM} in their preachers and teachers. In doing that, they effectively confirm the presumption of christian elitism for their clergy, who come to treasure it. An effective way for them to perpetuate their elite status is to sugar-coat the Salvation message for their admirers. Those free tickets to Heaven are selling like hotcakes!

The *religiopolitical* enterprise headquartered at Rome used to sell what were called INDULGENCES. Those were sometimes forgiveness for sins a buyer planned to commit later! The *neochristian* “finished work” enterprises have spun the gospel message into the promise of lifetimes of indulgences. Those are now available from a Protestant church not far away from where **YOU** live!

Who could resist forgiveness for a lifetime of reckless debauchery? Avoid Hell and Purgatory and go straight to Heaven when you die! “Hey, guys! Get yours before that bachelor party!”

Did Jesus really provide those for us at the cross? Did He really say that we should each go back to living as before? Is that really what “grace” is about? Might such conclusions be intelligently rational or hilariously irrational? Might non-Christian observers be justified or not justified in concluding that Christians clearly aren’t the brightest folk on the planet?

- ✓ “But he that lacketh these things (*the fruit of the Spirit*) is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his OLD sins.” —2 Peter 1:9



Sorry. This topic is not intelligently debatable, so we won't be debating it. Do with this information what you will, but please remember that life is the ultimate IQ test; okay? Want more? www.Link1.info/news-1

Oh! and we now suspect that corrupt politicians must've learned the art of SPIN from corrupt preachers!



If our lovely young Sunday School teacher gal is to die while practicing her unrepented lifestyle of one-night-stands, there'll be no participation trophy for her.

If our handsome young traveling business guy is to die in his unrepented lifestyle of alternating between one-night-stands and “getting saved” again, there'll be no participation trophy for him on Judgment Day, either.

Both mindsets/lifestyles are a mockery of Our Lord's sacrifice at Calvary.

✓ “For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.” —Hebrews 10:26

“Surely that can't be true, Linda. I mean, I've always heard that we shouldn't be a doubting Thomas!” Elizabeth reacted. “Every time I find myself questioning things I hear or see in church or even on Christian television I always pray for forgiveness!”

“I used to do that, too, Elizabeth. But then I read something that turned me around 180 degrees,” offered Linda. “Look! It's right here in your Bible. Read it!”

“Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.” —Acts 17:11^{NIV}

“But isn’t that out of context?” Elizabeth snapped.

“There! You’ve just done it! You’ve been a skeptic! That’s great! Do you feel guilty?” asked Linda.

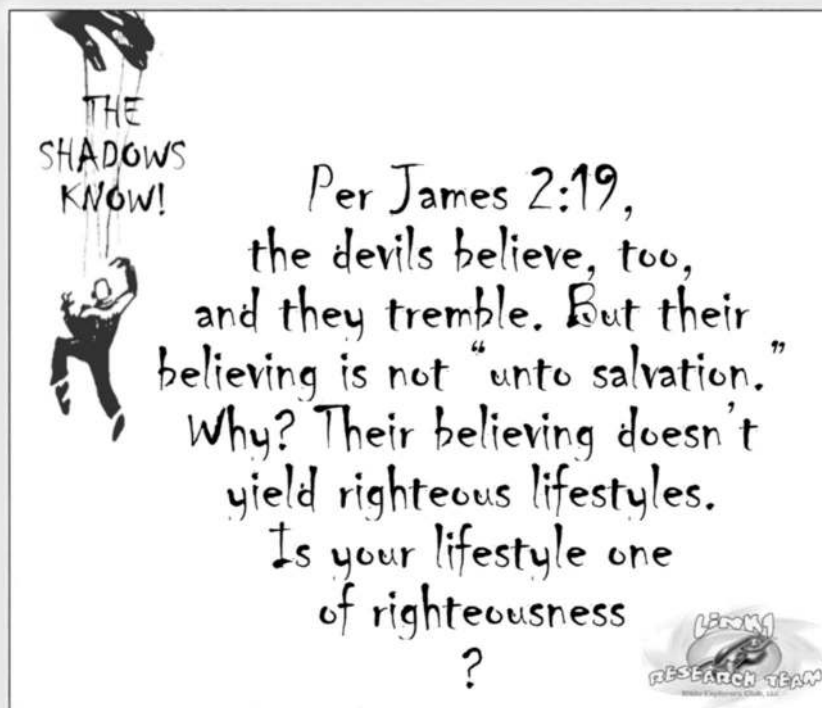
“No. Well, yes...a little, I guess.” Elizabeth blushed.

“Have you ever thanked the Lord for giving you a brain that lets you sort things out...you know, figure stuff out for yourself?” Linda asked.

“Well, yes.”

“See? You have the spirit of a sound mind! According to 2 Timothy 1:7 that’s a gift from God! To avoid the full use of your good mind, especially when searching for Truth, would be a senseless waste of God’s gift!”

***God’s gift of a sound mind
is a terrible thing to waste.***



Might Thomas have been among the most noble of Jesus' disciples?

Are you a Doubting Thomas? If not, you should be; but in the style of the Bereans!

PS:



That 2nd Thief

— Read about his Golgotha role at Luke 23:39-43 —

“Remember me when you come into your kingdom.”

“Truly I say to you, today: You will be with me in Paradise.”

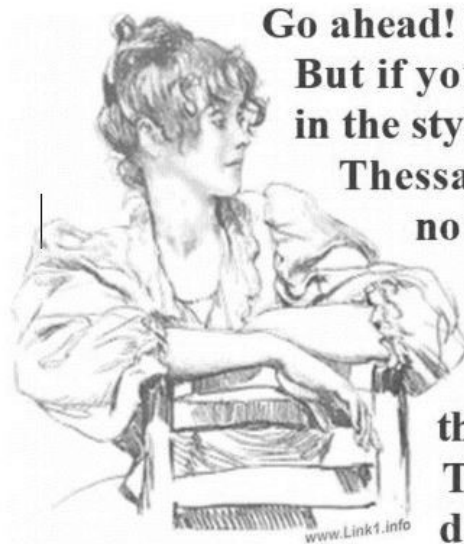
Yes, we know that doesn't match what you've always been taught.
Two critical reasons why what you've been taught isn't trustworthy:

1

Jesus did not go to Paradise that day; He went somewhere else!
Where was He until His resurrection? See Matthew 12:40.

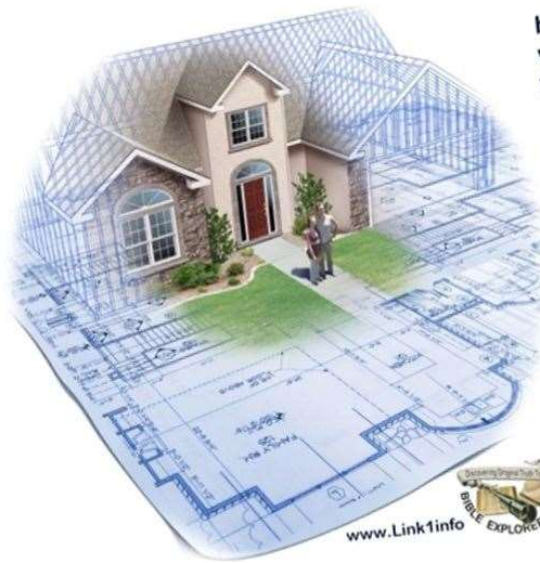
2

The original Greek language had no punctuation.
When adding punctuation, the translators
didn't cross-reference the scriptures!



**Go ahead! Be a skeptic!
But if your skepticism is
in the style of the Acts 17:11
Thessalonians, there will be
no legitimate help for you.
We won't even try. Want
Original Truth? Be an
intelligent skeptic, like
the Acts 17:11 Bereans!
That's more noble,
don't you think?**





Per 2 Timothy 4:7, Paul knew that his hope of salvation would be in vain if he were not to run his assigned race and finish it. Jesus said that differently...

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have [sufficient] to finish [it]? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish [it], all that behold [it] begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.” —Luke 14:28-30

So why are millions convinced that our only requirement is believing...that we don't really need to work out our own respective salvation with fear and trembling, as at Philippians 2:12?



The **HOTLINKS**

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