

TODAY’S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Bobby Rader / Opening Prayer by: Jerry Mallernee
Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#144 O Worship the King
#76 How Great Thou Art

Scripture Reading by: Rock Cary
#214 Have You Seen Jesus My Lord?

Communion Devotional by: Craig Girard
Lord’s Supper and Contribution

#3 Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah
Sermon: “Life Under the Sun”
Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

#911 Bring Christ Your Broken Life
#881 Mansion Over the Hilltop
Closing Prayer by: Tommy Cary

We will be watching the second season of
“The Chosen” at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday nights in
the fellowship room.

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

July 23, 2023

“Stand Firm in...Liberty”

Galatians 5:1

Confidence in Christ: Conclusion

Over the last few weeks, we have explored why we should have more confidence in our salvation. We examined what the overarching narrative of Scripture reveals about God’s nature and purpose, that he takes the initiative to restore the relationship with humanity that has been broken by sin; he is reaching out to us, earnestly desiring us to be reconciled to him. He has achieved that reconciliation through Jesus; if we are incorporated into Christ through faith, repentance, and baptism, we have peace with God. And as long as we keep walking in the light, living faithfully—which is not to say perfectly—then we continue in that relationship.

We need to remember that because it goes a long way toward addressing some of the insecurity that so many Christians seem to have. Much of it is rooted in a misunderstanding of God’s nature and what he has accomplished in Christ. But beyond that, some seem to operate under the assumption that we move out of salvation every time we sin and back in every time we repent; that belief underlies the fear of many, that their standing before God is precarious, hanging on their acknowledgement of each and every sin they ever commit. But is that really what the Bible teaches? I cannot find evidence in Scripture for it.

It is clear that we can fall from grace:
For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. (Heb 6:4-6)

Can we drive God from our lives? Yes, absolutely. But there is no indication that this happens immediately with every type of sin

To begin, we must remember God is seeking to save us, not destroy us, as we thoroughly laid out in the first article in this series. Good is not looking for an excuse to condemn us! He already had us in that state before the cross. If that were his goal, then there would be no reason for Christ to come in the first place. We must remember, then, that Christianity is a growth process. Numerous passages speak to that (e.g., Eph 4:11-16; 2 Pet 3:17-18). We grow in our comprehension of what it means to walk in the light; there are things I now understand that I did not when I first became Christian. God does not expect or demand that we have it all figured out at once.

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Robert Modisette is on hospice care.

Gerald Bagwell, Joe Edd Stifflemire's brother in law, is on hospice.

Gayle Coleman was in the hospital last week.

Lon Hobbs is in San Jacinto Methodist Hospital to repair a broken hip.

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meet Monday, July 24th at 5:30 p.m.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, Aug. 1st at 8:00 a.m.

Primetimers will be meeting at Ranch Hand Café on Tuesday, Aug. 8th at 6:00 p.m.

Summer Book Club

The book we are reading and studying is "Gentle and Lowly". A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board. We will meet each Thursday at 6:00 p.m. If you are interested in this see Bryant.

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

<u>Elders</u>	<u>Deacons</u>	<u>Minister</u>
Ken Coleman	Zach Arthur	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Daniel Balch	
Don Taylor	Danny Balch	
Robert Ward	Walden David	
	Gus Tristan	

Shut Ins

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh, Lois Watts, Willo Dean Ellis

"Stand Firm in...Liberty"

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Further, the evidence of Christians in NT who had unrepentant sin in their lives but were still in a relationship with God proves one does not immediately lose salvation with any sin. Consider the church in Corinth: to say they had a few problems is a massive understatement. They were factious, they perverted the Lord's Supper, they even celebrated a man openly living with his Father's wife. Despite this, Paul calls them the *church of God, brothers*, and *saint*. He even says, *You are in Christ Jesus (1 Cor 1:30)*. It is plain from his letters that they needed to repent; yet, their relationship with God was not yet severed.

There are other congregations we might note, like the church in Ephesus in Revelation. Jesus stated to them, *Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove our lampstand from its place – unless you repent (Rev 2:5)*. Jesus threatened to remove their lampstand, to end their standing in his people; if they rejected his warning, they would sever the relationship. But, critically, that had not yet happened. The passage implies that while sin will drive God from us, that is not immediate.

Finally, we must consider what kind of sin was committed that went unconfessed. Why does this matter? Because many faithful Christians live in fear that they will make a mistake and be lost because they didn't get a chance to repent. I always use the admittedly ludicrous example of a fellow working on his roof who hits his thumb with a hammer, lets slip a curse word, and falls to his death. That sort of hyperbole shows us how absurd this idea is, and I cannot find it taught in Scripture.

In the OT, God differentiated between types of sin: there was unintentional sin and a "high-handed" sin (**Num 15:25-31**). High-handed sin is rebellious, it is shaking your fist in God's face, defiance. Jesus himself spoke of the *weightier matters of the law*. Paul differentiated between sins: if one was caught in a trespass, Paul said restore that one gently (**Gal 6:1-2**); but, to one in immoral sexual relationship, deliver them to Satan (**1 Cor 5**). God's patience with sin seems to relate to the level of rebellion and the level of influence on others.

We must remember that, ultimately, God makes the decision. The way to be sure of our salvation is to seek to obey God's will and confess sin; of course, we should not want to face God with unconfessed sin in our lives. But neither should we fear God is searching for a reason to condemn us.

To sum up, the apostle John puts it well near the end of his first letter: *I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 Jn 5:13)*. It is not sinful or arrogant to have confidence in your salvation. Your confidence is not in yourself; it is in Christ.

Bryant Perkins