

Protection for the mind



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ETERNAL SECURITY

Please note that this booklet is primarily written to Believers.
The purpose of this article is to set Believers free from the enemy's power of dead works so that they can fellowship with God and other Believers, hear His voice, obey Him, and receive His promises.

Introduction

I often work with people who are Christians, but people who wonder how they have allowed themselves to get into their miserable situation. Quite often they have left their minds unprotected. The enemy has attacked them at the point of their thoughts and brought fear, guilt, condemnation, depression, anger, and an open door leading to habitual sins.

Paul counseled the church of Ephesus to put on the whole armor of God, that they may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. **Ephesians 6:11** "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." While most Christians put on various pieces of the armor, the one that many people omit is that of **the helmet of salvation**. **Ephesians 6:17** "And take the helmet of salvation"

The helmet of salvation is for the protection of the mind against some basic wrong thinking. The wrong thinking is "performance oriented salvation". The performance oriented salvation thinking is a false belief system which hinges upon one earning his salvation based upon living up to a certain standard. The individual has been taught or has created in his mind that certain standard. This system of beliefs entertains the concept that one has to perform to earn his salvation or to perform to maintain his salvation.

Such a belief system is a stage for many mental, emotional, and social problems. Often in such a belief system, the individual never really knows whether or not he is saved or can be saved. Why? The standard for measurement is often obscure being based upon various opinions of various men rather than the Word of God. Even if the standard is fairly clear, the individual has no assurance that he will ever live up to it. There is no guarantee that he has confessed and repented of every single sin. He may have forgotten one. He might miss a sin and still go to hell. After all, how many sins does one have to sin in order to be a sinner? This brings a sense of insecurity, doubt, and **ungodly** fear of God to the individual.

Another difficulty in such a belief system is that even if

that last, they will last. In Scripture, we find five crowns which Believers may receive and cast at the feet of Jesus (Revelation 4:10-11). However if a man builds upon the foundation of Christ things which can be burned, they will be burned.

c. However, the man **will be saved** even though his work may be burned.

2. Because of God's love for us as His children, He disciplines us for our benefit.

Hebrews 12:5-11 "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

a. By **relationship**, we are either a child of the devil or a child of God.

b. However we also see a clear distinction between **relationship** and **fellowship**. Because of God's love for Believers, He doesn't disown them when they disobey Him, but He rather disciplines them in love.

c. God's discipline for His children is here and now. It is not being cast into hell at the Great White Throne Judgment. It is also for our benefit that we may learn to live in righteousness.

DEAR GOD:

1. I confess that I have disobeyed you and understand that is sin. (Romans 3:10, 3:23).
2. I understand that there is a consequence for my sin, which is a death on the inside. (Romans 5:12, 6:23).
3. However, I believe that Your Son, Jesus, came and lived a perfect life, but died in my place upon the cross, and then was resurrected the third day, that he might offer to me eternal life. (Romans 5:10, Isaiah 53:6).
4. Therefore, I commit my life to Jesus as my Lord (ruler, king, boss). (Romans 10:9-10).
5. I ask that you, by your Holy Spirit, come and live inside me and make me a **new** spiritual person. (II Corinthians 5:17). Amen.

Final Warnings!

1. Believers are to be careful of what they build upon the foundation of Christ.

I Corinthians 3:11-15 "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

- a. We should see that there is only **one foundation** (Jesus Christ) and that there is a difference between the foundation, the person who builds upon the foundation, and what one builds upon the foundation.
- b. If a man builds upon the foundation of Christ the things

standards are fairly clear concerning one's actions, the sins of the heart are usually overlooked or ignored. Jesus said that the person who looks upon a woman with lust has already committed adultery in his heart. This belief system is a stage for denial of truth. This denial is like a pebble thrown into a pond. There is wave of denial that spreads through his life.

If the individual for a time meets the standard, then there is an open door for pride to enter. He can pat himself on the back and say, "Look at what I have accomplished." With pride also comes a critical spirit toward others who have yet to reach his standard. He will look down at others and condemn them for not measuring up to his standard. This makes for poor social relations. Even if he pities others, the pity brings discouragement rather than encouragement.

Furthermore, if the standard is rather low, sooner or later the individual at a weak moment will give in to some sin. The result is either, denial, blame, or self condemnation. Again, denial is like a cancer that spread to other area of life. Blame is saying, "I would not have done wrong, if such and such had not happened to me." Self condemnation often carries with it anger, depression, and hopelessness.

What do the Scriptures say?

1. We are saved by grace.

Ephesians 2:8-9 "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." One good definition of "grace" is "the unmerited favor of God." Again, note that a salvation concept based upon our good works leads to pride and boasting.

Romans 11:6 "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work." **We can't have it both ways!** Salvation can only be by grace.

2. We are justified by faith without the deeds of the Law.

Romans 3:28 "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Here we find Paul's conclusion the the discussion. A good way to remember justification is "just as though you have never sinned."

Romans 8:33 "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Do we justify ourselves? No! Is it necessary for other people to justify us? No! It is the work of God alone.

3. We are adopted by God.

Romans 8:15 "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Note that we are set free from a "bondage to fear". The ungodly fear that one may lose his salvation keeps a Believer from having fellowship with God and other Believers and from receiving God's promises.

I John 4:10 "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." A parent who adopts a child, chooses the child which he adopts. God chose us before the foundation of the world to be His adopted children.

4. We are born of the Spirit.

John 3:1-8 "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. {again: or, from above} Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh,

Ephesians 5:27 "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

1. Some would say that we must live a perfect life in order to have our robes washed clean for Christ to receive us. However, the reality is that is accomplished immediately when we accept Jesus as Lord. **I Corinthians 6:11** "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

2. This is not done by doing good works, but by accepting the blood of Jesus as being the complete sacrifice for all our sins, past sins, present sins, and future sins. **Revelation 7:14** "And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Some Old Testament Examples:

Ezekiel 18:26 "When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die." **Psalms 51:11** "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me."

1. These concepts are also repeated in the book of Hebrews, but the author of Hebrews also declares that we have a better covenant based upon better promises.

2. Furthermore, no one in the Old Testament was born of the Holy Spirit. The new birth is unique to Believers who came AFTER the resurrection of Christ (John 20:22, Hebrews 11:29-30). The Old Testament concept was anointing, **not** the new birth.

Salvation Prayer

If you have come to realize that you haven't made a faith commitment to Jesus as your Lord, please pray the following prayer now and receive **Eternal Life**.

offend in one point, he is guilty of all." If one could lose their salvation, then one infraction within the heart of the 613 laws found in Scripture cause one go to hell.

I John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Luke 13:3 "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

1. No where in Scripture do we find any of the disciples confessing a list of sins! However, to initially receive eternal life, we must acknowledge our **sinful state** and **turn** to God through faith in Jesus. **Acts 20:21** "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Thereafter, we should confess and turn from our sins for **conscience's** sake.

2. In reality, I doubt that there is anyone who is aware of or even remembers every one of his sins to confess them to God. Do you? Yet, the Scripture says that can know that we **have eternal life**. **I John 5:12-13** "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

Revelation 3:5 "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

1. Some will use this passage to say that one's name will be blotted out of the Book of Life. I would agree. However, the questions are "What is the basis for the names being placed there and when were the names placed there?"

2. The names are placed there on the basis that Jesus is the sin substitute for the whole world (I John 2:2). The Book of Life was written before the foundation of the world (Revelation 3:8),

3. However Believers (the overcomers ... I John 5:4-5) have their names sealed there, **never** to be blotted out (Revelation 3:5).

and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Since the second birth is from above and by the Spirit it is termed "born again". Can one change their natural birth? No! Neither can he change the new spiritual birth.

5. We are sealed with the Spirit.

Ephesians 1:13 "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." This is a seal of approval. Furthermore, it is a seal of a finished work. When a document has a seal placed upon it, it becomes legal or finalized.

6. We are redeemed by the blood of Christ.

I Peter 1:18-19 "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." The term "redeemed" means to purchase with a price. The deal has been made and God does not go back on His agreements.

7. We are born of incorruptible seed.

I Peter 1:23 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." Even if one sins in the soul (thinks wrong thoughts, does something wrong, or gets angry when he shouldn't) this will **not** corrupt the spirit of the Believer. Furthermore, this incorruptible seed LIVES and ABIDES within the Believer forever.

I Peter 3:4 "But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." The Believer also has the capacity to put on the nature of this incorruptible seed or hidden man.

8. We are born of sinless seed.

I John 3:9 "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." A Believer can not sin in the spirit-man.

Why? Because the seed of God continues to remain in him. Since he is born of God, he does not have the capacity to sin in the spirit-man.

9. We are sanctified.

I Corinthians 6:11 "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The word "sanctify" means "to set apart". We are set apart from the world unto God. Furthermore, God is the one who has done it. We did not sanctify ourselves! Because we are sanctified in Christ, we should live a sanctified life.

Colossians 1:13 "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." We have been **translated** out of one dominion into another. Again, God did it. We are taken from darkness into the light, from death into life.

10. We are a new creation.

II Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." A Christian is not the same person that he used to be. He is an entirely new spiritual being. It is a matter of fact! It is accomplished by God through the Work of the Holy Spirit.

11. We have received God's divine nature.

II Peter 1:4 "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." We are not of the same nature that we once were. We have God's divine, eternal nature dwelling within our spirits.

12. God initiates the new birth.

John 1:12-13 "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." When we receive Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, we also receive the

2. The context of the passage is fellowship, not relationship. **Revelation 3:20** "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Our fellowship with God may vary from day to day, but our relationship to God as His children remains constant.

3. Lukewarm Christians make God sick to His stomach. Again, the purpose of this article is to set us free from the power of the enemy in dead works **so that** we can fellowship with God and other Believers, hear His voice, obey Him, and receive His promises. Amen!

Mark 3:28-29 "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." **I John 5:16-17** "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."

1. I have put these two passages together because they both relate to salvation.

2. We should look to see what the work of the Holy Spirit is to the world. **John 16:8-11** "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." The work of the Holy Spirit through the Believer to the world is to bring proof, as in a court case, of sin, because it does not believe in Jesus, of righteousness, because the only way to the Father is through Jesus, and of judgment because Satan is judged for his rebellion, so must mankind (the world opposed to Believers) judged for its rebellion. In reality, the only sin that will keep on out of heaven not accepting Jesus as Lord. We must also remember that if we break the law at one point, we have broken the entire law. **James 2:10** "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet

of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

1. In the interpretation of Scripture, there must be a balance. One truth taken **to** the exclusion of other truths, makes the one a lie. Should we do away with good works since salvation comes by faith? God forbid! Furthermore, we read in **I John 2:19** "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." Some come to church and go through the motions of committing their lives to the Lord without it being a reality. Soon, you don't see them in church any longer. Why? Their experience was not a true salvation experience. Yes, I know of people like that. Then later, they may come to realize that they were trying to save themselves, but could not. Then they may come to commit their lives to Jesus as Lord and receive the new birth.

2. James said that if one is truly born again, that he should produce some good works. God gives us faith to believe in Jesus through His Word. If we accept it, then He initiates the change within us producing the **new birth**. Once the new birth has occurred, then we will by the new nature within us produce some good works. However, if there are no good works, then we should suspect that there was no initial change within us.

Revelation 3:14-16 "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

1. The passages is directed to Believers, the church of the Laodiceans. We understand that this church was filled with the opinions of the people, as its name indicates, opposed to the Word of God. None the less, the people are Believers.

privilege to become children of God. We didn't just one day decide to become a child and become a child. One can not will himself into becoming a child of God. God is the one who initiates the new birth.

13. We are joined unto Christ.

I Corinthians 6:17 "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." The spirit of God has united with our spirit and has given us life. We have become united with God in the spirit-man. We have literally been "glued" together as two boards are glued together to make plywood

14. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Romans 8:38-39 "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 creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Nothing can separate us from God's love, including ourselves.

15. God does the keeping.

II Timothy 1:12 "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Once we have made a faith commitment to Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, God initiates His work within us. He then become responsible to keep us saved. Otherwise, no one would be saved longer than a few hours or days at most.

16. Jesus will never deny us.

II Timothy 2:12-13 "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." If we reject the Gospel, God will reject us. However, even when we come to disbelieve after once believing, Jesus can't say, "I don't know you" when he lives in us.

17. We dwell in Him, and He dwells in us.

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in

Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." We should see that God has put us in Christ that we may do good works. However, we don't do good works to get into Christ.

I John 4:15 "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." I have heard Christians say, "If you don't live up to a standard, you will be walking away from God." Hogwash! How can we walk away from God when God lives within us? We may take God (in us) some place that we should not, but we can't walk away from God.

18. We have a quality of life that is everlasting life.

John 10:28-29 "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." We should see that this life which is given to us at a point in time has lasting results. The term "eternal life" is an expression of a QUALITY of life. The life that one receives when he accepts Jesus is of the very highest quality of life that anyone can have. It is of a God-quality. Because it is of such a quality, it is also every lasting. They will never ever perish. In the Greek wording, there is a "double negative" used for emphasis! No how ... no way shall we ever lose eternal life. Furthermore, NOTHING can take us out of the God's hands. We can't even remove ourselves. Why? Because we did not put ourselves in His hands. God placed us there.

19. We, as Believers, are already seated spiritually with Christ in Heaven.

Ephesians 2:6 "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Yes, my body is currently on the earth, but my spirit is not limited to the earth environment. We can only be there with Christ in Heaven because of the work of God which is already accomplished in us. It would be ridiculous to think that we could be in Heaven one hour, be kicked out the next, and return the next.

afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."

1. The context is that of hearing the Gospel and rejecting it. If one hears the Gospel and rejects it, then there is no sacrifice that remains for him. We should understand that once a person has died, he has no further opportunity to receive Christ. **Hebrews 9:27** "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

2. In the conclusion of the passage, the author assures the Believers that they will not draw back, but do believe to the saving of the soul.

James 2:14-26 "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend

is to settle the issue so that we can go on to maturity. It is difficult to go on to real maturity until this issue is settled.

2. The author states that **if it were possible to lose your salvation that it would be impossible to regain it**. The psychological issue is that if one believes that he can lose his salvation, then he will focus his attention on the negative and will most likely end up doing the very thing that in his mind would cause him to lose his salvation. The person who says that he will never drink and focuses on drinking will most likely end up drinking.

3. However, the author states that he is persuaded better than this of the Believers. The author sees that the change that God initiates in the spirit of Believers will keep them from falling away. We should understand that we look on the outward man, but God looks on the inward man.

4. Most importantly, the author to the Hebrews says that we have a better salvation than one in which we could lose our salvation. We have a better covenant.

5. The major point of the book of Hebrews is to demonstrate that we have a better covenant than the old. In the new covenant, we are sanctified "once for all" through the death of Christ. **Hebrews 10:10** "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

Hebrew 10:26-39 "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of

What are the benefits of wearing the Helmet of Salvation?

1. We receive a freedom to serve Christ.

Hebrew 9:14 "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" The blood of Christ is meant to purge our conscience. We are to be set free in our conscience. Dead works are any works, good or otherwise, that we do to **obtain** or **maintain** our salvation. We are to be saved from such works! Why? So that we may be free to hear and obey the voice of God. If we are trying to become accepted or maintain our acceptance with God by living up to a certain legalistic standard, we are too busy to hear and obey God. We must be careful not to get the caught in this legalistic trap. We don't do good works to get saved or to keep our salvation. We, instead, are saved so that we may do good works.

2. We are free not to judge or condemn ourselves or others.

Luke 6:37 "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven." When we come to understand Eternal Security, then we are less condemning of others.

Colossians 3:13 "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." We should remember that we only see what is on the outside of others, while God looks at what is on the inside. We should receive others even as Christ received us.

3. We are to continually affirm "salvation by grace" that we may serve God.

Titus 3:5-8 "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That

being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." We should never get tired of teaching, sharing, preaching this truth of being saved by His mercy in order that we may be free to maintain good works.

Looking at some "so called" difficult passages.

John 15:1-16 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

1. The basic context of this passage is **not** salvation, but fruit bearing. Verses 1-3 discusses relationship with the qualifying phrase being "in me." One can be a child of God without bearing a significant amount of good fruit. The word translated as "take away" actually means to **lift up**. Verses 4-16, discusses fellowship. The qualifying word is "abide". Therefore, Jesus is exhorting the hearer to abide in Him that he might bear an abundance of fruit.

2. Although a portion of the passage may seem to imply that a Believer can be cast into hell to be burned, we must, by principles of interpretation, keep this passage in context of the whole of the passage and the whole Bible (I have just listed **19** other passages dealing with the subject). However, if one doesn't abide (fellowship) in Christ, his ministry may well be burned.

3. Furthermore, salvation is not solely based upon our choosing God, but that He has chosen us (vs. 16). before the foundations of the world, God foreknew those who would receive Jesus as their Lord and has predestined them to be conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29).

Hebrews 6:1-9 "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak."

1. When we look at the context, we see that the purpose of it