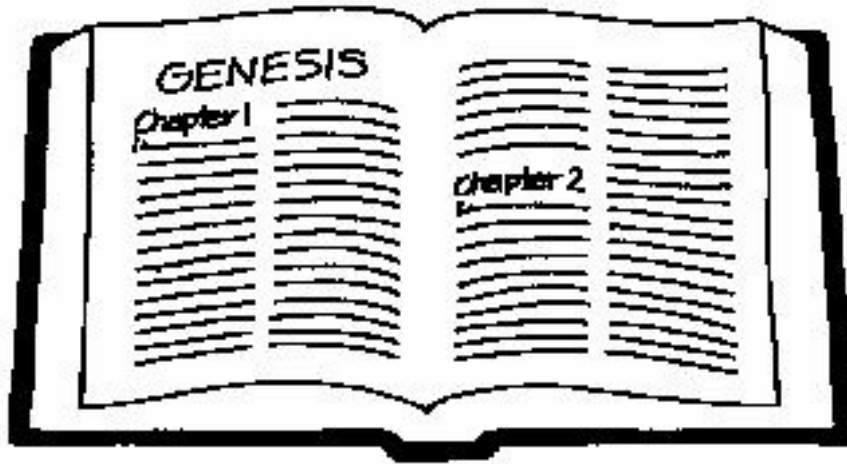


Maintaining Your Salvation

Bible Correspondence Course # 8



Introduction:

Lesson number seven identified the information revealed when men preached Jesus in the New Testament. The nineteen examples of conversion were all connected in that Jesus was preached. Preaching Jesus is preaching the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (Acts 17:10ff). Preaching Jesus is preaching hearing, believing and confessing the name of Jesus as being Lord (Acts 18:4ff; Rom. 10:9-10). Preaching Jesus involves preaching repentance and baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 8; 16:30ff). Such preaching, when submitted to, gets one into Christ as a Christian (cf. Gal. 3:26-27). This lesson shall examine what one must do after baptism for the remission of sins.

The working of sin

The word sin is "*harmartia*" in the Greek defined as, "a failure, fault, sin; a fault committed by one" (LS 41). A standard, or law, must be in place that such a failure even has a possibility of occurring. Since we know that sin exists (cf. Rom. 3:23), we know that law exists. The apostle Paul stated a plain fact saying, "*where there is no law, neither is there transgression*" (Rom. 4:15). Again, the same apostle said, "*apart from the law sin is dead*" (Rom. 7:8b). Finally, the apostle John stated, "*every one that does sins does also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness*" (I Jn. 3:4). There can be no doubt that the Christian is under law (cf. Gal. 6:2). When that law is violated, sin occurs. No matter what part of the law is broken, it is sin (cf. James 2:10).

The consequence of sinful actions is separation from God (cf. Isa. 59:1-2). The remedy is the blood of Jesus (cf. Col. 1:19-22). The blood of Jesus for reconciliation

can only be beneficial to those who have heard the saving message of Jesus. Those in Christ are those who believe the gospel message of Jesus and confess His name. Individuals willing to repenting of past sins and be baptized for the remission of those sins (cf. preaching Jesus lesson #7) are known as Christians who are in Christ Jesus. Understanding the nature of sin (it separates one from God) helps us in our next discussion.

Does our baptism continually cleanse us of sins?

Some have claimed that once we are saved from our sins, we are always saved. This theory is known as the “impossibility of apostasy” or “perseverance of the saints.” Some even go as far as saying that the perfect life of Jesus Christ is imputed to a child of God so that one cannot lose salvation. The Bible nowhere teaches that once a man is saved he is always saved. The Bible clearly tells us that sin separates one from God no matter if that individual is saved through the blood of Jesus Christ or not (cf. I Jn. 1:5).

The apostle Paul said that “*the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*” (Rom. 6:23). Again, the apostle John said, “*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*” (I Jn. 1:8). The point is that since law exists, so does sin (I Jn. 3:4).

Preaching the whole counsel of God

When the apostle Paul was returning to Judea on his third tour of preaching, he stopped in Miletus and had a conversation with the elders of the church in Ephesus. Paul told the elders that he “*shrank not from declaring unto you the **whole counsel of God***” (20:27). The counsel of God is the law of Jesus Christ, the gospel message (cf. Isa. 2:1-4 compared with Jn. 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38). The gospel message is the truth (Eph. 1:13). The truth is the teachings of Jesus (Jn. 14:6). Whatever Jesus taught the apostles became authoritative law (cf. Eph. 3:1ff; Col. 3:17; I Pet. 4:11). The reasonable conclusion is that preaching Jesus does not end at hearing, believing, confessing, repenting and being baptized for the remission of sins. Preaching Jesus includes the “*whole counsel of God.*”

The apostle John made a clear statement of faithful obedience to the whole counsel of God saying, “*whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one comes unto you, and brings not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works*” (II Jn. 9-11). The individual, whether Christian or non-Christian, who does not abide (follow and take up residency) in the teachings of Christ is one who participates in “*evil works*” and “*hath not God.*” Man can, therefore, “*fall from Grace*” even though he was once reconciled to God through the blood of Jesus Christ (cf. Gal. 5:4; the Galatian Christians had forsaken the law of Christ and went back to the Law of Moses).

Maintaining your salvation

The conclusive argument from the above text is that one can sin after baptism and so lose the soul for eternity. Each one of us will be judged by the word of God. Jesus said, *“He that rejects me, and receives not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day”* (Jn. 12:48). The words of Jesus tell us that those who would participate in the *“works of the flesh... shall not inherit the kingdom of God”* (Gal. 5:16-21).

Since we all sin, even after baptism (Rom. 3:23; I Jn. 1:8), we are called upon to *“maintain our salvation”* (cf. Titus 3:8). The whole counsel of Jesus must be followed, and when it is not, we sin (I Jn. 3:4; II Jn. 9-11). To recognize sin, we must know the law! The Law of Moses identified sin to its adherents (cf. Rom. 7:8), and so the Law of Jesus Christ identifies sin to its subjects (I Jn. 3:4). Each Christian is to *“give diligence”* in his quest for truth and holy living (cf. II Tim. 2:15; II Pet. 1:5-10). Paul said that the Ephesian Christians were to *“walk worthily of the calling in which you were called”* (Eph. 4:1). The word walk implies a manner of life!

Maintenance implies doing

The Law of Jesus Christ instructs man to:

- A. *“Deny ungodliness and worldly lust... to live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world”* (Titus 2:11).
- B. To *“bear fruit”* and so glorify the name of God (Jn. 15:8).
- C. Bearing fruit is identified in Gal. 5:16, 22-26.
- D. Forsake worldliness (Gal. 5:16-21; I Jn. 2:15-17).
- E. Preach the gospel to lost souls (Acts 20:18-21; Phil. 4:8-9; I Cor. 4:16-17; 14:37).
- F. Build other Christians up in the excellence of the knowledge of Jesus Christ (Acts 20:18-21; I Cor. 4:16-17; Heb. 10:24-25).
- G. *“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life”* (Rev. 2:10).

Remedy for the Christian’s sins

What is the remedy for the Christian who sins? Shall we be baptized over and over for sins committed? Again, we want to look to the Word of God for instructions in this area. The apostle John said, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us”* (I Jn. 1:9-10). When the Christian sins, he does not get baptized over and over, but rather he confesses those sins to the Father asking for forgiveness of those sins with a contrite heart (cf. II Cor. 7:9-10).

A Bible example of a Christian who sinned after baptism and the remedy given

Acts chapter 8 reveals Philip's preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ in the region of Samaria. The people there heard the word of God and obeyed the gospel, being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 8:12). When Peter and John heard that the gospel had been preached in Samaria, they traveled to meet the new brethren. Peter and John laid their hands on the disciples and gave them the power of the Holy Spirit to perform gospel-confirming miracles. When one of the Christians of Samaria saw this (Simon), he too desired to be able to transfer this gift. Simon even offered Peter and John money for this power. *"But Peter said unto him, Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. For I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity"* (Acts 8:20-23).

This event is important for every Christian today. The example instructs us regarding what we must do to receive the remission of sins once we have become a Christian. Peter told Simon to repent and pray to God for forgiveness. Each Christian today must have that contrite heart that is willing to admit when the Law of Jesus Christ has been violated and be willing to repent asking God to forgive them.

Conclusion:

Truth involves much more than the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Truth is the sum total of the teachings of Jesus Christ (II Jn. 9). The apostle Paul referred to truth as the *"whole counsel of God"* (Acts 20:27). Violating any revealed principles is defined as sin (I Jn. 3:4). The Christian can and will sin from time to time (I Jn. 1:8). The remedy to such sin is prayer and repentance (cf. Acts 8).

To understand and submit to truth is to voluntarily place one's self under law. The law of Jesus Christ demands Christians to live righteously, bear fruit, forsake worldliness, preach to the lost, build each other up in the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ and to remain faithful unto death. Such living is indeed a life of hope, direction and purpose. Truly the Christian is a blessed person.

Questions:

1. Define sin:
2. What law are Christians under (give scriptures)?
3. Does one become exempt from following the laws of God once he becomes a Christian (give scriptures)?
4. Is the truth more than information about the death, burial, resurrection, ascension, coronation and glorification of Jesus? Yes / No
5. Pilate once asked Jesus, “*what is truth?*” (Jn. 18:38) Please define truth:
6. Give Bible passages that indicate the Christians’ responsibility to conduct themselves in a godly manner.
7. List seven things the Christian is to do in order to maintain their salvation:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.
8. Does a Christian need to be baptized every time they sin? Please explain:
9. Give a Bible example of a Christian receiving forgiveness for their sins.
10. What does II Jn. 9-11 say?