



Chalmette Church of Christ

March 8th, 2015

CHRISTIANS CAN FALL AND BE LOST

Garland M. Robinson

The subject of apostasy is so prevalent in the Scriptures that you can take your Bible and randomly open it at any place, Old or New Testament, and on either of those two pages you will likely read something about falling away. Some have noted there are as many as 2,500 verses that speak on this topic. For example, in Hebrews 4:11, we read about the danger of falling away. "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." In 2 Peter 3:17 we are warned about falling away. "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know [these things] before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." In 1 Timothy 4:1-3 it is predicted that some would fall away. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, [and commanding] to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." In 2 Timothy 2:17-18 we have an example of some who fell away. "And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."

If one cannot fall away and be eternally lost, why are we exhorted so frequently to be faithful so as not to lose our reward? "...Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). What if you're not faithful unto death? Will there still be a crown of life? The obvious answer is No. "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" (Rev. 3:5). What if you don't overcome the temptations and cares of life? This text says your name will be blotted out of God's book of life.

Unless we add faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity to our lives, we will be barren, unfruitful, and blind; and consequently, will have fallen from the Lord (2 Peter 1:5-10). "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12). An evil heart of unbelief causes us to depart from God (Heb. 3:12-14). We must follow peace and holiness or we will never see the Lord (Heb. 12:14). Unless we seek after the Lord's goodness, we will be "cut off" (Rom. 11:22). The devil knows Christians can fall and is working diligently to that end (1 Peter 5:8). If we can't fall, he is wasting his time.

Many of the parables teach that Christians can fall away and be lost: the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-13), the net (Matt. 13:47-50), the talents (Matt. 25:14-30), the sower (Luke 8:13), the unfaithful servant (Luke 12:41-48), the vine and the branches (John 15:1-8).

If Christians can't fall, why did Jesus teach his disciples to pray, "lead us not into temptation" (Matt. 6:13)? Why did Peter say that when we turn from the truth we are in a worse condition than if we had never known (obeyed) the "way of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:20-22)?

It's amazing how some people have a wild and vivid imagination in attempting to make the Bible fit their manmade doctrines! Jesus said, "But in VAIN they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the COMMANDMENTS OF MEN" (Matt. 15:9). If the Bible teaches anything at all, it teaches a child of God can fall away from God's saving grace and be eternally lost. Unless we strive to enter the strait gate (Luke 13:24) and give diligence to make our calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10), we will fall.

To those who go back to keep any part of the Old Testament, Galatians 5:4 says, "Christ is become of no effect unto you,...ye are fallen from grace." Could any passage be clearer? If this verse is not sufficient, what would God have to say to make people believe Christians can fall away and be lost? You can't fall from a place you've never been. One needs help to misunderstand this passage. Sadly, the world is full of false teachers who are leading men astray in helping them to misunderstand the Bible!

Second Peter 3:9 says the Lord does not wish for any to perish (be lost) but for all to come to repentance. The key is REPENTANCE; without it, no one will be saved (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30). God has provided a means of forgiveness for those who have gone back to the "old life." An example of this is shown by considering the account of a converted sorcerer whose name was Simon (Acts 8:12-24). After becoming a Christian, he desired to obtain the gift of "laying on of hands" by offering Peter and John money to buy it.

Because of his deed, he was said to be "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." His heart was not right in the sight of God and was shown to be wickedness. Could any doubt he had not fallen away? He was told to repent and pray in order to be restored to the fellowship of God. This is the same way it is done today for God's children who have gone astray.

The way back to God is for the "fallen" to repent, confess fault and pray. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another. ... The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20). First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The point is, if we do not confess our sins, he will not forgive us. Galatians 6:1 says, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Jude 21 says, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

If you are an unfaithful member of the Lord's church, why not come back to faithfulness by repenting of your sins and making things right with your home congregation? The eternal consequences of the wayward Christian is worse than if you had never known the way of truth and obeyed it (cf. 2 Peter 2:20-21). Can we expect to see you at church the next time the doors are open?

News & Notes

- Mark will be making his annual trip to Budapest this year and will be leaving on May 21st and returning on June 8th. Keep him in your prayers during his time of travel for a safe trip there and back.
- Vacation Bible School will be on June 15-18. Brandon Britton and his crew will be coming down to help us conduct our VBS this year. This is his 3rd time helping us!
- Please keep Jim Danner in your prayers at this time. He has been sick and is now home from the hospital. Also keep those mentioned this past week in your prayers as well.
- Our Spring Gospel Meeting will be on April 5-9. Mark Reynolds will be our guest speaker! Make plans to attend each night and also invite others.
- The MSOP Lectureship will begin on March 29th. Mark and several others will be leaving on Monday, March 30th. If you would like to go, please see Mark for more details.
- Please keep Alice Riley, Margo Rodney, and Malcolm Vazquez in your prayers at this time as they are each battling different illnesses.

March Birthdays & Anniversaries

13– Marlene Vazquez

14-Ashleigh Towle

22-Anthony Smith



Prayer List



**Alice Riley
Clifford Markum
Sherry Towle
Margo Rodney
Ella Gillard
Krisztian Montague
Addrean Jenkins
Gloria Smiles
Joel James
Ryker Amaya
Gary Huettmann
Carol Calix
Marie Pennington**

***All of our brethren scattered across
the United States & our troops in
Iraq**



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Services of The Church
Sunday

Bible Classes 9:00 am

AM Worship 10:00 am

PM Worship 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 pm

Elders

Mark Lance 504-250-8492

J. V. Russell 504-277-0251

Charles Whitley 504-277-4717

Butch Snyder 504-682-0051

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Mark Lance 504-250-8492

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Scott Russell 504-232-4120

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