

DOCTRINE

ETERNAL SALVATION

LESSON #16

The question as to whether a person possesses eternal salvation from the time of the new birth has been tossed about perhaps even from the time of the early church in Acts. We feel the importance of this doctrine reaches into every facet of our lives. The Bible, in our view, is quite clear on the subject. Therefore, we will attempt to show from Scripture the clarity of this doctrine.

The Character of our Salvation – In order to better understand our salvation, let us look at the character of it, and also what actually occurred at the time of the new birth. I Cor. 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 “washed” here means “to bathe away.” This word needs to be carefully looked at, because it has different meanings as to its usage. For example, notice John 13:10 – “Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.” Jesus was making reference to the laver at which the priest washed his hands, not his whole body. So here, the disciples needed only to wash their feet. So when Paul said, “...ye are washed...” he was saying we had been bathed, and therefore did not need to be bathed again. Sanctification is the work that must occur daily, but not the bathing.

The word “justified” in I Cor. 6:11 means “to set forth as righteous, to justify by a judicial act; by a judicial decision to free a man from his guilt (which stands in the way of his being right) and to represent him as being righteous.” Note: this judicial act was an act of God, based on the work of His Son on the cross – not on whether we are continuing to be good or not. In fact, other than repentance and faith in the work of Christ on the cross, there is no justification. Therefore, our justification rests down upon the finished work on the cross.

II Cor. 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.” This is the essence of the new birth. Just as Nicodemus said to Jesus, “...can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?” (John 3:4) Obviously not. Neither can we alter the new birth.

Rom. 4:5-8 – “But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” Note: we are counted righteous without works. If this is so, and we believe it is, then our puny works would not keep us saved any more than our works would save us in the first place. Note also: our sins are covered. This is a continuous covering. It will not ever stop. Some say we must ask God for forgiveness regularly, or we will be lost. Not so! How would this be possible if we continuously live in God’s forgiveness? Some would quote I John 1:9 and 2:1-2 – “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous: And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” Vs. 9 of chap. 1 is speaking of that which the sinner must do in order to be saved. See vs. 8, which says, “If we say that we have no sin...” showing the need to have our sins forgiven. Vs. 1 of chap. 2 is

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simply showing the continuous work of Christ before the Father of maintaining our righteous standing. Note: to make these verses say something else would violate the principle of God's plan in our salvation. If we will note, Paul never uses the thought of "confession of sins" for the believer, or of "asking forgiveness." What he does say is to repent, or yield, or obey, etc.

The following are a few references relating to our subject:

John 5:24 – Note: "...hath everlasting life..." A present possession.

Heb. 7:25 – "...He is able also to save them to the uttermost..."

John 10:28 – "...neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."

Phil 1:6 – God will perform His work in us.

I John 5:13 – "...that ye may know that ye have eternal life..."

1. Explain the doctrine of eternal salvation.
2. Explain how people teach loss of salvation.
3. What is the meaning of the word "washed," and how does this apply to our salvation?
4. Explain the word "justified" and how it applies to our salvation.
5. Explain John 13:10.
6. What does our justification rest upon?
7. If our salvation rested on works, what would happen to faith?
8. Upon what are we counted righteous?
9. Must we ask forgiveness for sins committed to keep our salvation? How do you know?
10. What should we do about them?
11. Explain I John 1:9 and 2:1-2.
12. Tell what eternal salvation means to you.