

Course DC109: Covenant of Salvation

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16



¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— ² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us— ³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. 1 John 1:1-4

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." Romans 1:17

¹¹ And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. ¹² He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. ¹³ These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. 1 John 5:11-13

Intro, Eternal Life and the Believer:

The believer in Christ has eternal life, but who is a believer? Is a believer one who has once believed in his life in Christ, or one who continues to believe? Scripture clearly reveals the latter, for "whoever believes in Him (i.e., believeth [K. J.], in Greek, *present active participle* [commonly expressed by "ing" in English]) should not perish but have everlasting life." Eternal life is the life both in and of God Himself. It is life which neither had a beginning nor an end, being inseparable from the Person of God Himself whose nature alone is *true eternal* (i.e., having neither a beginning nor an end). Eternal life is an essential attribute of God's *divine nature*). Therefore, it is impossible to speak of anyone having eternal life who is out of fellowship/relationship with God. Only "He who has the Son has life" (the eternal life of God's divine nature). But, "he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." Through faith (*"believing"*) in Christ we are made partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4). In John 15, Jesus used the illustration of branches on a vine. Just as a branch partakes of the life (sap/juice/blood) of the vine because it is in the vine, so the Christian partakes of Christ's eternal life (a partaker in the divine nature) through being in Christ. But just as a branch which is separated (cut off) from the vine no longer partakes of the life of the vine, if one does not continue with Christ, he no longer partakes of the divine nature. For just as the life of the vine continues on whether or not a branch partakes of it, so the eternal life of Christ goes on, whether or not a person continues to partake of it. Thus, "The just shall live by faith."

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I.) Salvation is IN Christ Alone:

2 Cor. 5:17 in Christ, he is a new creation

Rom. 8:1 no condemnation . . . in Christ Jesus

Rom. 6:11 alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord

Jude 1:1 preserved in Jesus Christ

Eph. 1:4 chose us in Him

Eph. 1:6 accepted in the Beloved

1 Cor. 1:2 sanctified in Christ Jesus

2 Cor. 5:21 the righteousness of God in Him

2 Tim. 2:10 salvation which is in Christ Jesus

1 Cor. 1:30 in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption

Eph. 1:7 in Him we have redemption through His blood

Eph. 1:11 in Him also we have obtained an inheritance

II.) Salvation Revealed as a Conditional Covenant:

(Those Who Abide/Remain/Partake of the Life in Christ)

- Relationship Through Abiding/Remaining: John 15:4 Abide in Me, and I in you.
John 15:5 He who abides in Me, and I in him...without Me you can do nothing
John 15:6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out...
John 15:7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you...
John 15:10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love...
1 John 2:6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as...
1 John 2:17 ...but he *who does the will of God* abides forever.
1 John 2:27 ...just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.
1 John 2:28 ...little children, abide in Him...
1 John 3:14 He who does not love his brother abides in death.
1 John 3:15 ...you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.
1 John 3:24 “...he who keeps His commandments abides in Him...”
1 John 4:13 “By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us...”
1 John 4:15 “...God abides in him, and he in God.”
2 John 9 “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.”
John 5:38 “But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe.”
1 John 2:24-25 ²⁴ Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.
- Partaker of Salvation: . . . by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 2 Pet. 1:4
For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end... Heb. 3:14
1Cor.10:21...you cannot partake of the Lord’s table and of the table of demons.”
Eph. 3:6 ...partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel...
Phil. 1:7 ...you all are partakers with me of grace.
Heb. 3:1 ...holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling...
Heb. 6:4 ...partakers of the Holy Spirit...
Heb. 12:10 ...partakers of His holiness.
- The Conditional “If”: Col. 1:21-23 ²¹ And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled ²² in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight-- ²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.
- Rom. 8:12-14 ¹² Therefore, brethren, we are debtors--not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
- 2 Chron. 15:2 The LORD is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.

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*See also: 1 Cor. 9:23/ 1 Cor. 10:17-20 (for larger context of v:21) / (and by way of a negative comparison, Eph. 5:7 / 1 Tim. 5:22 / 2 John 11 / Rev. 18:4).

2 Tim. 2:11-13

¹¹ **This is a faithful saying:**

**For if we died with Him,
We shall also live with Him.**

¹² **If we endure,**

We shall also reign with Him.

If we deny Him,

He also will deny us.

¹³ **If we are faithless,**

He remains faithful;

He cannot deny Himself.

- John 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "IF YOU ABIDE IN MY WORD you are My disciples indeed."
- John 8:51 Most assuredly, I say to you, IF anyone KEEPS MY WORD he shall never see death.
- 2 Peter 2:20-21 ²⁰ For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. ²¹ For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

III.) The Warnings against Falling Away From Christ Reveal the Covenant is Conditional:

*Thank God that He is ready and able to forgive and cleanse the one who comes to Him because of Christ (1 John 2:1-2). Yet, apostasy (falling away from Christ) is a real possibility to be guarded against. Truly, the grace of God is great enough to get those who live by faith through any temptation, trial, or persecution which may come against them. For concerning all things which may come against us, we are made more than conquerors through Him who loved us (Rom. 8:37). Therefore, if a believer falls away, it is not because of the strength of the adversary; it is not from a lack of grace on God's part; nor is it from the overwhelming power of the temptation which may come against such, but because one does not continue to trust (believe) God and endure. For unmistakably, we can always be triumphant in Christ (2 Cor. 2:14). "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, **who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it"** (1 Cor. 10:13).*

Apostasy a Peril to be Guarded Against

- Heb. 3:12-14¹² Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³ but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end.
- Luke 8:11-15 ¹¹ "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. ¹² Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. ¹³ But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. ¹⁴ Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. ¹⁵ But the ones *that* fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.
- Rom. 11:19-23 ¹⁹ You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." ²⁰ Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. ²² Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. ²³ And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

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- Heb. 10:26-29 ²⁶ For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. ²⁸ Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹ Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?
- Heb. 10:35-38 ³⁵ Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: ³⁷ "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. ³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."

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Actual Accounts of Apostasy

- 1 Tim. 1:18-20 ¹⁸ This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, ¹⁹ having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, ²⁰ of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.
- 1 Tim. 1:3-7 ³ As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, ⁴ nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. ⁵ Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith, ⁶ from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, ⁷ desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.
- 1 Tim. 5:15 For some have already turned aside after Satan.
- 1 Tim. 6:9-10 ⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.
- 2 Tim. 2:15-18 ¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. ¹⁶ But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. ¹⁷ And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, ¹⁸ who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.
- Acts 1:24-25 ²⁴ And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen ²⁵ to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."
- 1 Cor. 10:1-12 ¹ Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, ² all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. ⁵ But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. ⁶ Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. ⁷ And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." ⁸ Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand

fell; ⁹ nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; ¹⁰ nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹ Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹² Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

- 2 Peter 2:15-17 ¹⁵ They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; ¹⁶ but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet. ¹⁷ These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.
- 2 Tim. 4:9-10 ⁹ Be diligent to come to me quickly; ¹⁰ for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica--Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.
- Gal. 5:4-5 ⁴ You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. ⁵ For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

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The Law of Forgiveness in the Kingdom

- Matt. 6:12&14-15 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. . . . For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
- Matt 18:25-34 ²⁵ But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. ²⁶ The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' ²⁷ Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' ²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' ³⁰ And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. ³¹ So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. ³² Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. ³³ Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' ³⁴ And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.
- Matt. 18:35 So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

1 Tim. 4:16 **Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.**

1 Tim. 6:20-21 ²⁰ **O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— ²¹ by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.**

James 5:19-20 ¹⁹ **Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, ²⁰ let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.**

Through the Warning to Continue Steadfastly

- 2 Pet. 3:16-18 ¹⁶ as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. ¹⁷ You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; ¹⁸ but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory both now and forever. Amen.
- Jude 5-6 ⁵ But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶ And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;
- 2 Pet. 2:3-9 ³ By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber. ⁴ For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; ⁵ and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of eight people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly; ⁶ and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; ⁷ and delivered righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked ⁸ (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented *his* righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds)— ⁹ then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,
- Heb. 2:1-3 ¹ Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. ² For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, ³ how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, . . . ?
- Heb. 10:35-39 ³⁵ Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. ³⁶ For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: ³⁷ "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. ³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." ³⁹ But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

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IV.) Initial and Final Salvation and Condemnation (The Call to Endure Till the End)

Initial (or present) salvation and final (or coming) salvation, though related, are not one and the same. Scripture reveals a distinction between initial and final salvation (see passages below). One who becomes saved experiences initial salvation, but final salvation is for those alone who endure until the end. The same distinction is clearly set forth regarding initial (or present) condemnation and final (or coming) condemnation. Thus, "he that believeth not is condemned [initial condemnation] already." However, praise God, such may repent and place their faith in Christ and be rescued from final condemnation.

- 1 Peter 1:3-12 ³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again [present salvation] to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation [final salvation] ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you greatly

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rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, ⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls. ¹⁰ Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, ¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹² To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

- Rom. 13:11-14 ¹¹ And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation [final salvation] is nearer than when we first believed [present salvation]. ¹² The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. ¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.
- Heb. 9:28 . . . so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him [present salvation] He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation [final salvation].
- Mark 13:13 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

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The following account told by C. H. Spurgeon illustrates well the distinction between present/initial salvation and coming/final salvation, as well as illustrating present and final condemnation – illustrating how the two are related, and yet how one does not guarantee that the other must follow:

I am told that years ago a boat was upset above the falls of Niagara, and two men were being carried down the current, when persons on the shore managed to float a rope out to them, which rope was seized by them both. One of them held fast to it and was safely drawn to the bank; but the other, seeing a great log come floating by, unwisely let go the rope and clung to the log, for it was the bigger thing of the two, and apparently better to cling to. Alas! the log with the man on it went right over the vast abyss, because there was no union between the log and the shore. The size of the log was no benefit to him who grasped it; it needed a connection with the shore to produce safety. — C.H. Spurgeon, *All of Grace* (public domain).

While the two men were heading helplessly towards destruction, they represent well two who are in a state of initial condemnation, who (on their present course) will experience final condemnation (the destruction from the waterfall). However, while they both held on to the rope, they both represented well those who experience initial salvation. Yet sadly, only one endured until the end through holding on to the rope. The other exchanged the rope for a false hope in the log with disaster following. One experienced both initial and final deliverance through enduringly holding on to the rope. The other experienced initial deliverance, but only for a time – and in the end experienced final destruction.

. . . he that **heareth** [present participle] my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but **is passed** [perfect indicative] from death unto life. John 5:24 (KJV)

. . . but he that **believeth not** [present participle] **is condemned** [perfect indicative] already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. John 3:18 (KJV)

Every lost person presently stands completely condemned [perfect indicative] because he continues to “believeth” not [present participle]. But this does not mean that he will not be able to be saved by faith. For his standing “condemned already” does not mean that he must unalterably and unconditionally remain forever condemned regardless of whether or not he ever comes to faith. Likewise, the present standing of every saved man who “is passed” from death into life [perfect indicative] does not mean that he must unalterably and unconditionally remain so regardless of whether or not he shamefully turns from his hearing and believing into disobedience and unbelief. (See also John 3:36.)

(For a deeper study, the reader is referred to the lectures and notes, DC401 Christian Security.)