

The UNION

Get Ready to Meet the King!

God Calls His Church to
Truth, Faith and Holiness

Joan H. Richardson

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Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 9781612153698

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CHAPTER 17

On Eternal Security

One of the first questions a young believer asks is, “Can I lose the gift of eternal life God has given me?” We nearly always assure him, “Absolutely not. No sin you can commit will change it. You were saved by grace, not by works, and good works don’t save you now.” But the Scriptures contradict those words: now the Holy Spirit does good works through us for our salvation, witnessing to us that we are His, and He sticks closer than a brother.

A Hell to Shun

He wants children who desire to be like Him. In other words, He wants us who want Him. That’s the premise of this chapter, and it’s true: it would be wiser to tell the new believer God did not save him to lose him again; now God comes alongside to help him live a new life. He should know he must not return to the way he lived as a sinner, because now the Lord is with him to draw him into His holiness. If he receives this, His Holy Spirit will live in his heart as his Guide and Teacher, helping him to live by faith and steering him away from sin.

His first step of obedience is to make a confession of Christ as Savior and Lord; his next step is to unite with Christ, baptized in water, a symbol of His baptism into death when He was raised as the firstborn of the dead. At the Jordan His Father declared Him as begotten by Him. The new believer is buried and raised from death with Christ to live a new life in Him.

The new believer should learn about the cross, the blood atonement, the work of Christ on his behalf, and sanctification in his yielded heart. If he falls, he must confess it; God faithfully forgives and cleanses him of unrighteousness. (See 1 Jn 1:9) He should learn he represents Jesus to others. As he prays, believes the Word, and fellowships with other believers, his life will change. He learns to forget the past, to pursue gentleness, and to love others by faith in His Holy Spirit’s power to bear fruit.

Throughout their writings, the apostles urge us to obey the Lord, proving our love for Him. Yeshua told us, if we love Him,

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we'll obey Him, but whoever loves this world or the things in this world does not love the Father. If we love Him, we fear and obey Him and can be sure heaven's gate will open for us because we're trusting in His power, not striving in our own. We rest in Him to do good works.

Be Very Sure

If we don't believe God, we won't pay careful attention to His warnings. If we believe His words, we purify ourselves by embracing them. If we are willing to obey, He will walk us through our trials one day at a time until we own the victory He gained. Those who know Him live to surrender to His will, no matter how small it seems to us.

Many geniuses are in hell while the mentally challenged are shining in heaven's kingdom, because God is love. We can't rely on our intelligence to enter His presence: it only takes childlike faith. The apostles warned the congregations of believers against sin and unbelief:

⁴ For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, ⁵ and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame. ⁷ For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; ⁸ but if it bears thorns and briers, *it is* rejected and near to being cursed, whose end *is* to be burned. (Hebrews 6:4-8)

The previous passage concerns the gift of life. After walking in the Spirit in relationship with the Father, if we return to sin after living in the Spirit, God forbid that we disdain the Gift of the Son of God! The key phrase is, *it is impossible to renew them again to repentance*. They'd repented and were renewed before but deliberately returned to sin. Few believers know of an eternal sin since teachers assure us there's no sin God won't forgive. But they ignore or discard the warnings, imagining they aren't meant for us, while the fear of God is what keeps us. And the churches wonder why we should repent?

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³¹ “Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy *against* the Spirit will not be forgiven men. ³² Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the *age* to come.
(Matthew 12:31-32 NKJV; cf. Mark 3:28, Luke 12:10)

Why would the apostles *alarm* us if it were not possible for believers to spurn the gift of life we have received and thus lose our inheritance? No matter what a man says, the Word endures forever. Its solemn warnings to the righteous remain as steadfast as its promises. The apostolic goal is to arm us with knowledge for our salvation. If anyone would condemn himself, God knows the intentions of our hearts as no one else can.

Apart from the fear of God, we endanger our consciences. Though it is discomfoting, the fear of the Lord gives us an edge against evil. Each time we turn from evil, we draw closer to our Father, and He knows our hearts; even when our hearts condemn us, He knows us better than we know ourselves, and He loves us. In persevering, we enter His rest by faith. First comes His fear; then, His Sanctuary.

and every one who is having this hope on him, doth purify himself, even as he is pure. (1 John 3:3 YLT)

Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary; ...(Is. 8:13-14a)

Every word of God is true, not just the ones that stroke us but also those that admonish, warn, and rebuke us. If we walk in the Spirit, He comforts us and ensures our safety; if we sin, the fear of God works repentance in our hearts. Our Father may severely chastise us, but if we repent, we won't be lost. All who belong to Him suffer His discipline. “... *For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*” (See Heb. 12:6) As we grow in wisdom, we avoid the sting of His hand, but disobedient children refuse to repent:

²⁶ If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, ²⁷ but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of

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raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.²⁸ Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.²⁹ How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?³⁰ For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people."³¹ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Hebrews 10:26-31 NIV) – the second warning

If we recklessly or willfully turn away from Jesus, returning to sin, we become reprobate. The context is not about stumbling into sin or even falling but about deliberately turning from the gift of salvation by sinning without repentance. We're all warned to cherish His grace and His sanctifying blood; to respect His sacrifice, and to desire His presence.

The more popular teaching denies the scriptures that warn us against sin. Teachers who say we can't fall away are lying to us, believing the devil's deceptions that destroy their own souls. Many teachers speak pleasant words to carnal hearts. Whatever pleases them, they seem to follow, receiving and manipulating words they don't want to believe.

You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.
(Hebrews 10:36 NIV)

3 Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.² We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check. (Jas 3:1-2 NIV)

The writer of the following passage addresses *brothers* and *partakers of Christ*, to hold fast the confession of faith. He exhorts us to secure our assurance by the way we live:

¹² Take heed, 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 To-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

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¹⁴ For we were made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confession stedfast unto the end;
¹⁵ while it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. (Hebrews 3:12-15)

Perhaps we refuse to admit our fear that the warnings apply to us; but when the lion catches his prey, it's by contradictions against the words of God. Compromising the truth does not alter it. By repentance, we persevere to crucify compromise, and by believing the truth, we are saved.

¹⁷ Join with those who follow my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. ¹⁸ For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. (Philippians 3:17-19 NIV)

Maybe most of us neglect the Scriptures because we've been indoctrinated by men for so long that our hearts have become dull to receive what God is saying. When we turn its pages, the Bible's words aren't fiery or exciting anymore. It seems lifeless because our hearts have been trained to resist the truth.

We're in a dangerous spiritual condition, and we could die that way. If we *dare* to believe God and throw out the leaven of teachings that have deafened our ears and hardened our hearts, then we'll carefully listen to His words and experience His fire that changes and purifies us from the inside out. Read its words aloud so that your ears can hear it:

2 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. ² For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;³ How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; ⁴ God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? (Hebrews 2:1-4)

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We have been born again to live in the miraculous by faith in our supernatural God. That's not dull at all! Yeshua has given us new birth, and the difference is evident in who we are. We died and rose with Him to live entirely new lives. If we are in Him, we are beside our holy Father whose Spirit lives in us and hears every prayer. How can we continue as though we belong to the natural world while confessing we believe in His death, resurrection, and ascension? There's nothing natural about that!

Armed Warriors

¹³ Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober *in spirit*, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts *which were yours* in your ignorance, ¹⁵ but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; ¹⁶ because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

¹⁷ If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay *on earth*; ¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood of Christ*. ...

²² Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, ²³ for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, *that is*, through the living and enduring word of God.

(1 Peter 1:13-19, 22-23 NASB)

³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶ and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. (2 Corinthians 10:3-6 NKJV)

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We must arm ourselves. Paul urged us to prepare. We don't rely on the weapons of the world but on the power of our God. The Lord commands us to be at peace with all men as much as we are able, and hold onto faith, the shield that protects us. We will keep the assurance of our salvation by avoiding sin, which can undermine our confidence.

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. ¹³ Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

(Ephesians 6:10-13)

Practicing Faith

When we read and embrace the Scriptures, we hide them in our hearts, meditating on them and cherishing them. Speaking their words, we intercede for the church, our nation, and our leaders; praying for Israel, for persecuted saints, and for our enemies, we give thanks to God whose sovereignty is in His Word. We keep our lamps [our hearts] filled with oil [the Holy Spirit], knowing He will come for a perfect and blameless bride who will welcome and serve Him, loving others as herself. She's dressed in white linen, the righteous works of the saints. And she's washed in the water of His Word.

Can we be all we should be? Not in ourselves alone, but the Holy Spirit is the life of Jesus who lives, not only in heaven, but also in us. He accomplishes the victories, even over wandering thoughts and deceptive desires, because we believe all things are possible with God: *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. (1 Jn. 5:4)* We can do all He commands us by His Spirit, i.e., Christ in us who strengthens us. (See Php. 4:13) We win our victories through prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. We prove Jesus Christ is the King of kings each time we pull down another stronghold by believing every word of God, reminding His nemesis of his defeat.

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These are not idealistic goals. If His words weren't practical, they'd be false and misleading. Instead, they provide a pragmatic lifestyle by faith in a miracle-working God. The Scriptures have guided believers who have proven the integrity of God for ages, sternly warning those who would abuse grace by presumption. Though these are difficult words to receive, it's time to put off the old and put on the new:

¹⁷ These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved.

¹⁸ For speaking out arrogant *words* of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, ¹⁹ promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved.

²⁰ For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. ²¹ For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them. ²²

It has happened to them according to the true proverb, "A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT," and, "A sow, after washing, *returns* to wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter 2:17-22 NASB; cf. Ezek. 18:24; Pr. 26:11)

Who can say his carnal nature is not like that of a dog or a sow? The Spirit gives life to our bodies; without righteousness, no one has this life. It's not theoretical: it's real. We suffer discipline and correction but neither take our troubles lightly nor give up hope; we'll learn the lesson well for next time:

⁵ And you have forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons:

**My son, do not take the Lord's discipline
lightly,**

or faint when you are reprov'd by Him,

⁶ **For the LORD disciplines the one He loves
And punishes every son He receives.**

(Hebrews 12:5-6 HCSB; cf. Proverbs 3:11-12)

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²⁶ Those who consider themselves religious and do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves and their religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. (James 1:26-27 NIV)

³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. ⁴ Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”?

⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:

“God resists the proud,

But gives grace to the humble.”

⁷ Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded. ⁹ Lament and mourn and weep! ¹⁰ Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.
(James 4:3-10 NKJV; cf. Pr 3:34)

His Spirit gives birth to Spirit; kind to His same kind. We must live by faith in His Spirit for righteousness. There is no better way to mature than to activate our faith in daily, mundane tasks. Do we fly off the handle when things don't go our way? or will we praise Him in everything? If we believe God loves us and cares about what we do, our reactions change with the meekness of Jesus, knowing He is always with us.

²⁴ “But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity and does according to all the abominations that a wicked man does, will he live? All his righteous deeds which he has done will not be remembered for his treachery which he has committed and his sin which he has committed; for them he will die. ²⁵ Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not right.’ Hear now, O house of Israel! Is My way not right? Is it

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not your ways that are not right? ...²⁷ Again, when a wicked man turns away from his wickedness which he has committed and practices justice and righteousness, he will save his life.²⁸ Because he considered and turned away from all his transgressions which he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die.”

(Ezekiel 18:24-25, 27-28 NASB)

Have faith in God. Certainly the King of Israel is merciful, preferring grace for all who seek Him, but if we don't believe the truth, gambling our guesses are right, we risk our souls. Instead, let's yield to His words by believing and honoring the LORD.

The Tenakh is the Hebrew Bible, called the Old Testament by Christians. But gentiles misname the writings of the Jewish prophets, often ignoring their pages as Jews do the new covenant writings. As a result, not many churches know Israel's critical role in world history while not many synagogues know the New Testament is all about the Tenakh.

Perhaps we should call the Bible's books by more proper names: the Torah, the Prophets, the Writings, the Gospels, and the Letters as Part 1 and Part 2 rather than contradictory writings, which they are not. The Messiah and His teachings, promised by Moses, has come, but that doesn't discard the value of what was written in ancient times under the inspiration of the Spirit. Jesus regularly quoted the ancient prophets. He is the Word of God.

The apostles explained the differences between covenants: particularly between Mosaic law and the final Sacrifice. They also explained the harmony of the Scriptures: The first part tells the way of God with Israel as our example, foreshadowing a new covenant and revealing His righteousness. The apostles drew their words from the ancient books. Committed to those words, believers have died as martyrs, following the Lord Jesus, the prophets, and the apostles, none of whom shrank from death. Knowing they gave up everything to be like their Lord, the same is true of believers worldwide today.

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

(James 1:2-4 NKJV)

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Convenience and comfort are pleasant to her taste, so the church has not feared God, swallowing the deception of eternal security, no matter if a believer dies while practicing sin. The Word tells us, if we continue to sin after receiving the grace of God, it would be better for us if we'd never known His grace.

Disobedient Children

If eternal security for believers who live in sin were true, we would easily find it throughout the apostles' writings. Instead, we meet numerous roadblocks and warnings—red flags against the teaching that's prevalent in today's churches, and the devil loves their lies.

Wolves are among us, flooding the church with deceptions. Satan has convinced us that sins of Christians are ignored by God who only sees the blood, but repeatedly, the apostles' writings warn us: if we continue to sin, we'll die! Romans 8:13 does not refer to sickness and death but to eternal death. The Word is spiritual—when a believer's body dies, he himself *sleeps, he doesn't die!*

¹⁸ If someone has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him, ¹⁹ his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him to the elders at the gate of his town. ²⁰ They shall say to the elders, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a glutton and a drunkard." ²¹ Then all the men of his town are to stone him to death. You must purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear of it and be afraid. (Deuteronomy 21:18-21 NIV)

How painful for parents whose children rebelled without repentance against their affection and guidance! Having given us free wills by faith in His Son, God has watched His own cleave to sin, even loving this world. Israel is an object lesson: God will destroy the disobedient sons who prefer sins, leading to death. Our real desires affect how we behave.

The churches have been told, "No one can snatch you out of His hand." But that isn't what the Scripture says. No one has been promised eternal life apart from obedience, taking up the

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cross and walking like Jesus did. Here's that word in its context:

²⁷ “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;”²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.”
(John 10:27-30 NASB) [We can only obey by His empowerment.]

⁷ Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

**“Today, if you hear His voice,
8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,
9 on the day of testing in the wilderness,
where your fathers tested Me, tried Me,
and saw My works ¹⁰ for 40 years.
Therefore I was provoked with that generation
and said, “They always go astray in their hearts,
and they have not known My ways.”
11 So I swore in My anger,
“They will not enter My rest.”**

¹² Watch out, brothers, so that there won't be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart that departs from the living God. ¹³ But encourage each other daily, while it is still called **today**, so that none of you is hardened by sin's deception. (Hebrews 3:7-13 HCSB; cf. Psalm 95:7-11)

There are many arguments and manipulations of the Bible's words. How often we've heard the deceptive serpent! The devils always ask the question, “*Has God really said ...?*” Then the snake proceeds to wind his way through the Word, leading us on a path to destruction.

He also uses the introduction of all the different teachers' teachings. “Have you heard so-and-so...?” He adds twigs to the weaving—anything he can find to mislead or redirect us from the Scriptures. *What chutzpah!*

For our sakes, God required the Hebrew parents to do as our holy Father in heaven will do. He gave us the *right to become* His children, but if we continue to rebel rather than submit to His words, then we are the *disobedient children*, the hypocrites who are destroyed with all of the sinners. We shall not perish, but

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have eternal life—as we live by our faith, which is what it means to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Whether we live or die depends on believing His words by acting on them. (See Jn. 3:16) We resist evil by yielding to His Spirit's power and by prayer.

God is almighty, and He is able to finish His good work in us if we believe on His Son, and praying to our Father in His name. The sooner we learn that we can do nothing but fail by our own efforts, the sooner we'll move forward to apprehend the maturity of Jesus Christ in God the Father by His Holy Spirit.

He only wants us who want Him; it's why He treated Israel as He did; He will do the same to us if we behave the same toward Him. Is that difficult to understand? If we don't want to be like Him, then we don't want Him. All He requires is that we enjoy Him, loving His company, sharing conversations with Him, and feeding on His words. Over the test of time, Jesus appears in us by walking in fellowship and love with others.

There is no other path to life, no other escape from hell than *Christ in you, the hope of glory*. (See Col. 1:27) We all stumble into sin, but God extends grace to us who return to Him. Eternal security belongs to us who persevere by faith, even in our trials, keeping the faith because Yeshua rose from the dead. The Spirit leads us into steps after Him until His ways become our habits.

²² "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness! (Matthew 6:22-23 NIV)

The choice to sin led to death in Eden; but we who continue to press toward the mark of love and holiness seek eternal life. If by His strength, we live like the Son of God, His righteousness will increase in us, and where good works abound, *they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*. (2 Pet. 1:8)

Understanding the process of sanctification strengthens our resolve. When we realize there is no other way to be righteous than by faith in Jesus Christ, we persevere through the greatest trials, even after we've been disappointed in ourselves. Faith raises up our faces to look to Jesus, and the pursuit is on again!

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Is this a doctrine of works? Yes, and this doctrine of works by the Holy Spirit inspired the writers of a new covenant. The Spirit of Jesus lives in each of us who receives Him and believes in Him. Abba gives us His Holy Spirit who willingly obey Him.

Can we claim our works as credit to ourselves—as our own righteousness? We claim this: we believe the power of Jesus Christ in us equips us to do His will. We obey because we believe He has given us His righteousness, and we behave like we believe our confession is true because faith is *the reality of things hoped for*—their very evidence!

God credited Abraham’s works to him as righteousness since he believed God, later acting like it, proving his faith. Because he believed, Abraham feared God and applied his faith; even in the greatest test, his faith rose to life by his works, and the LORD God comforted Abraham because his faith was living and proven by his actions: he behaved like he believed in the Almighty One.

The well-known adage is often true: “Actions speak louder than words”; but words, overflowing from the heart, reveal the soul and direct the course of our lives: with words that proceed from our hearts, we believe and confess our faith; then, act on it.

Without considering the Scriptures, we would eagerly listen to everything our teachers and prophets say, and we’d believe every word. We might reason together with human logic, while ignoring what God says. Wondering why we should repent, we haven’t believed Him though we profess the faith.

³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith; but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. ³⁹ But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. (Hebrews 10:38-39; cf. Hab. 2:3-4) [The writer encourages us who believe God. If we twist His Word, we will suffer the consequences.]

¹² “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to everyone according to his work. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last.”

¹⁴ Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and

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idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.
(Revelation 22:12-15 NKJV)

Cares and pleasures of the world make the Word unfruitful. If we say, “Yes, but we’re still saved,” our words reveal we have no desire for purity. *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. (Jas. 3:13)* By His apostles’ words, the Spirit urges us to live worthy of His calling, aiming for holiness that leads to His resurrection—our full redemption! Paul reminds us that we are not alone:

¹² Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. ¹³ For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Philippians 2:12-13)

¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (1 John 2:15-16)

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, ¹² Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? (2 Peter 3:11-12)

The meat of the Word is difficult to swallow, but it’s here for all believers, not just for the elderly among us. If we’ve been Christians for years, we should be eating spiritual food, not just drinking milk. It’s time to apply our assurance with fear and take in the things we’ve thought we couldn’t receive. If we pursue the truth, His Spirit reveals it to us.

⁵ “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

⁶ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” (Revelation 3:5-6 NKJV)

Protestant Teachings

²⁰ Wisdom calls aloud outside;
She raises her voice in the open squares.
²¹ She cries out in the chief concourses,
At the openings of the gates in the city
She speaks her words:
²² "How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity?
For scorers delight in their scorning,
And fools hate knowledge.
²³ Turn at my rebuke;
Surely I will pour out my spirit on you;
I will make my words known to you.
²⁴ Because I have called and you refused,
I have stretched out my hand and no one regarded,
²⁵ Because you disdained all my counsel,
And would have none of my rebuke,
²⁶ I also will laugh at your calamity;
I will mock when your terror comes,
²⁷ When your terror comes like a storm,
And your destruction comes like a whirlwind,
When distress and anguish come upon you.
²⁸ "Then they will call on me, but I will not answer;
They will seek me diligently, but they will not find me.
²⁹ Because they hated knowledge
And did not choose the fear of the LORD,
³⁰ They would have none of my counsel
And despised my every rebuke.
³¹ Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way,
And be filled to the full with their own fancies.
³² For the turning away of the simple will slay them,
And the complacency of fools will destroy them;
³³ But whoever listens to me will dwell safely,
And will be secure, without fear of evil."
(Proverbs 1:20--33 NKJV) [Wisdom speaks to attentive listeners.
Those who sleep miss the meanings of the words.]

It couldn't be clearer: personal responsibility and relationship are required for us to become His children who inherit our birthright and blessing by faith in His words.

³⁰ "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,³¹ because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man

On Eternal Security

whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.” (Acts 17:30-31 NASB)
[Re: His judgments and the return of our Lord from heaven]

ADONAI has chosen soldiers for the terrible Day of the LORD.
No army can match the troops of the King, Yeshua:

- 2** Blow the trumpet in Zion;
 sound the alarm on my holy hill.
Let all who live in the land tremble,
 for the day of the LORD is coming.
It is close at hand—
- 2** a day of darkness and gloom,
 a day of clouds and blackness.
Like dawn spreading across the mountains
 a large and mighty army comes,
such as never was in ancient times
 nor ever will be in ages to come.
- 3** Before them fire devours,
 behind them a flame blazes.
Before them the land is like the garden of Eden,
 behind them, a desert waste—
nothing escapes them.
- 4** They have the appearance of horses;
 they gallop along like cavalry.
- 5** With a noise like that of chariots
 they leap over the mountaintops,
like a crackling fire consuming stubble,
 like a mighty army drawn up for battle.
- 6** At the sight of them, nations are in anguish;
 every face turns pale.
- 7** They charge like warriors;
 they scale walls like soldiers.
They all march in line,
 not swerving from their course.
- 8** They do not jostle each other;
 each marches straight ahead.
They plunge through defenses
 without breaking ranks.
- 9** They rush upon the city;
 they run along the wall.
They climb into the houses;
 like thieves they enter through the windows.

Protestant Teachings

- ¹⁰ Before them the earth shakes,
the heavens tremble,
the sun and moon are darkened,
and the stars no longer shine.
- ¹¹ The LORD thunders
at the head of his army;
his forces are beyond number,
and mighty is the army that obeys his command.
The day of the LORD is great;
it is dreadful.
Who can endure it? (Joel 2:1-11 NIV)

Obedience by our faith in Him who is at work in us is everlasting life. This is our goal and our hope in Him. (See Jn. 12:49-50)

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. ¹³ Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to the end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—¹⁹ and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel. (Ephesians 6:10-19 NKJV)

He that believeth in the Son hath the witness In himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. (1 John 5:10)