



May 28, 2006 (Vol. 6)

TRUTH - The Way God Sees It (3)

by Douglas W. Hill
member of North Sparta church of Christ

Freedom of religion & speech are great benefits of our society. While we do not agree with what everyone says, it is better than living in a society that outlaws these freedoms. Thus, we heartily commend the Expositor for its willingness to allow differing views to be discussed in a civil manner.

Now, let us consider what is another example of human doctrines that are treated as if they come from God?

2. "Once Saved Always Saved." This is known by many names: Perseverance of the saints, impossibility of apostasy, eternal security, Calvinism, etc. But the question is - Does God teach this? Is it true that you can NEVER fall away from grace?

I remember just last year attending a Gospel Meeting. The preacher simply read Galatians 5:4 and the man I sat next to burst out loud in contradiction to it. I was shocked by the simplicity of that moment. How could a man outright deny what the text says?

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; **ye are fallen from grace.**" (Gal. 5:4)

The man said, "You can't fall from grace!" Can you see why he denied it? He rejected it because it wasn't what he believed. But did his denial change the text? Did Gal. 5:4 suddenly disappear from Bibles across the world? No. Mine still reads the same as it did

before. So does yours. So, what is the problem?

The problem is that in spite of what the text says, many do not do what Acts 17:11 says: "They received the word with all readiness of mind, and **searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**" Many find more comfort in Calvinism's perseverance of the saints, than they do in what the Bible says. Many have been raised on a steady diet of "eternal security", instead of Bible passages like: "Now I make known unto you brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, **by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you, except ye believed in vain.**" (1 Cor. 15:1-2)

And then there is Hebrews 10 that addresses blood washed brethren (v. 19) who "sin willfully" after receiving the knowledge of the truth (v. 26), and who after being sanctified by the blood, the trample it and show spite to the Spirit of grace (v. 29). To these who were once saved, the Spirit's word says they can only expect "judgment, and a fierceness of fire" (v. 27), a punishment worse than physical death (v. 28-29), and vengeance from God (v. 30). Does that sound like once saved always saved?

Friends, while God offers security, it is not unconditional security. We must be faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10) in order to receive the crown of life. No mincing of words will change the fact that God says our faith must be active in order to be saving, justifying and reckoned for righteousness (Jas. 2:14-26). If we stop believing in this manner, then our faith has ceased to be the kind that God wants. Yes God saves believers (Lk. 8:15). But He does not save those who cease believing (Lk. 8:13).

(To be continued)

CHANGES

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Not all churches of Christ are the same. As I am sure you know, you could just drive by the places of assembly and see very quickly a number differences. Some have barbeque pits, basket ball hoops, playgrounds. Some have even spent large sums to build meal halls and

gymnasiums, which they most inappropriately call "Fellowship" halls. Fellowship in the NT sense regards spiritual activity, not social and entertainment activities (cf. 1 John 1:6-7; 1 Cor. 11:34). Such signs of digression are rampant today.

Where will the young souls who are raised on this be in 50 more years? The focus is more and more on keeping people happy, rather than getting people committed to truth. In many such places you will be shut out if you dare to teach too pointedly on an issue that hits too close to home. I have even heard some of that number lament that the preaching isn't what it used to be - "no meat" just light sermons & entertainment. There has indeed been a change for the worse in all of this. So, why not make a change for the better? We invite all whose hearts yearn for the old paths, for strong preaching, for a congregation that both cares for one another and loves the truth - come visit. You may find that your heart will delight in the simplicity of returning to doing Bible things in Bible ways.

mother), **Monie Petty, Dave Poteet, Rose Taylor, Doris Williams, Wayne Williams** (Doris' son), **Horace Jones** (Doris William's brother), **Ruth Williams** (Betty England's niece), **Wanda Frazier; Robert England, Joyce Gardner; Ocia Bell-Jones & Charlie Jones** (Mother & brother to Doris Williams); **Sheila Eller** (Expecting); **Mia Godsey, Greg Sims** (Ralph Sims' nephew, recovering from open heart).

Those in Iraq: Jason Zelenak (Alisa Fletcher's brother), **Cary Matheny.**

We Invite You To All Our Services!

Sunday Bible Study	9 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6 pm
Wednesday Bible Study	7 pm

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Home Bible Study** – Sat., May 27.
- **Business Meeting** – Sun. May 28 @ 5pm.
- **Gospel Meeting** - Ron Roberts, Oct.15-20, 2006.
- **Men's & Ladies Classes** - Tues, June 13 @ 7 pm.

PRAY FOR

Mag Bumbalough, Greg Capps, Sabrina Capps, Thelma Cunningham, Donald Eller, Holly Jernigan (Joyce Gardner's niece has cancer), **John Ross Key** (Mary Cox's son), **Marci Miller** (Alisa Fletcher's

North Sparta church of Christ

359 North Spring St.
 Sparta TN 38583
 (931) 836-3321

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