

Dear Friend,

The more years I spend learning from the Bible and the Holy Spirit, the more astonished I am at how much modern day preachers have watered down the gospel that was delivered through Jesus Christ. After all, who do you think understands the gospel better? Modern day preachers or Jesus Christ Himself? I think there is no doubt that Jesus understands the true gospel better than anyone else.

Here is one example of what I mean. I was taught most of my life growing up in a denominational church the doctrine of, "Once saved ... always saved." The preachers were not endorsing a lifestyle of sin at all, but they were saying that the blood of Jesus would still get you into heaven ... even if you did still live a lifestyle of habitual sin.

Let me be clear on this point ... none of us are perfect and Jesus knows that better than any of us. I am not talking about living a lifestyle of "sinless perfection," but I am talking about people who continue to live habitual lifestyles of gross sin such as adultery, fornication, drunkenness, and the like ... AFTER they have a salvation experience. That "once saved always saved" doctrine gives the impression that people could backslide into those kinds of lifestyles and still go to heaven because they were "once saved," meaning; they received Jesus as their Savior at one point in their life so they are "always saved" no matter if they are habitually living in gross sin or not. Let's see if that doctrine squares with the doctrine Jesus Himself taught:

Matthew 7:21-23 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (22) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? (23) And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Here is another one of the Master's sermons:

Matthew 13:41-43 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; (42) And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. (43) Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Let's get a second witness from the apostle Paul, the man who wrote more than a fourth of the New Testament. Few people in history have laid down their lives for Jesus more than the apostle Paul did. Yet look at what he wrote about himself:

1 Corinthians 9:27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

The Greek word translated "castaway" in that verse is G96 in the Strong's Dictionary and the primary meaning of the word is ... REJECTED! It is the same Greek word Paul used in Romans chapter one when He says, "God turned them over to a reprobate [G96] mind." To make sure we understand, let's look at the illustration Jesus taught about the eternal meaning of being "cast away."

Matthew 13:47-50 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: (48) Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. (49) So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, (50) And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Hear what Jesus is saying ... the bad will be "cast away." What bad? From the earlier teaching we read, Jesus makes it clear He is saying those who habitually "commit iniquity" shall be REJECTED, even though they called Jesus their Lord during their lifetime. Where are they cast away to? They are cast into the furnace of fire! Jesus could not be more clear ... they are cast into hell.

Back to Paul for a moment; he is plainly saying, *"Even after I have spent a lifetime preaching Jesus to others, if I backslide to the point I am living a lifestyle of iniquity and die in that condition, I myself will be REJECTED!"* It is time for the church to believe, preach, and live the same gospel that Jesus brought to us from the Father. Thank God for the blood of Jesus that paid for all of our old sins. But the grace of God empowers believers to live above iniquity once you are born again, and Jesus is completely serious about us living in the freedom He paid such a terrible price for us to have. Here is the true grace of God:

Titus 2:11-12 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, (12) Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

God's grace at the new birth empowers us to "deny" sin in every form. Let us never be guilty of giving false hope to people still living in iniquity, even if they name the name of Christ and call themselves Christians. If they are habitually living in iniquity, they will be cast away and rejected. Let us only preach the same, pure gospel that Jesus Himself preached.

Your friend and co-laborer,

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