

22T05c Always Saved (Part 3)

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me @ the PUNLA coffee table.

Once Saved, Always Saved? I'm sure if you are a Christian you've heard this phrase. But the question we are exploring, "Is this doctrine Biblical"? I'm going to challenge the "Once Saved, Always Saved" doctrine to the Bible Test but I'm also going to challenge the alternative view to the Bible Test as the same time. The Bible Test requires that your perspective provide a reasonable explanation for all scriptures, not just the few that you like. Does all scripture support your perspective?

Today in Part 3 of our series "Always Saved", we are going to concentrate on the Parables of Jesus in the Gospels which some point to as challenging the doctrine of "Once Saved, Always Saved".

- Sower (**Matthew 13:1-35**, Mark 4, Luke 8)
- Unforgiving Servant (**Matthew 18:21-35**)
- Bridesmaids & Talents (**Matthew 25:31-46**);
- The Plough. (**Luke 9:62**);
- Vine Dresser (**John 15:1-17**),

Let's Pray. Father God, thank you for you. Thank you for Jesus. Thank you for being you. Guide our discussion today such that your message is spoken. Use me as you will. And if I speak poorly or in error, help the listener to only hear and remember what you want them to not my errant words. I pray these things in your name Lord Jesus, Amen

So, before we start our Bible Test today. Remember, the bible has a consistent message. If your interpretation of the bible is not consistent with all scriptures, then your interpretation probably needs to be reevaluated.

We will, again, look at each scripture passage from two perspectives about salvation and eternal life,

- **Choice #1:** On-time sincere choice. No business left to do with God.
- **Choice #2:** Follow King Jesus. We need a relationship with Jesus.

Also, keep in mind our two other questions.

1. Do I have free will?
2. What does believing in Jesus require of us?

Matthew 13 has Jesus teaching in Parables. The parable of the Sower (v. 1-9), purpose of parables (v. 10-17), explanation of the Sower parable (v. 18-23), parable of Wheat and Tares (v. 24-30), parables of mustard seed and leaven (v. 31-33), tares explained (v. 36-43). If you don't know these scriptures please read them. For our purposes, I'm

going to concentrate on Jesus' explanations. Parallel for this parable are found in Mark 4:1-20, and Luke 8:4-15. Matthew 13: 18-23 (NKJV) ¹⁸*“Therefore hear the parable of the Sower: ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²²Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”*

I think it is clear, Jesus is talking about 3 groups that *“receive the word of the kingdom”*. The word “receive” here could just as easily have been “believe.” But there are two groups, those who stumble and those who are unfruitful but are they still believers? But are they saved? I don't think we can say definitively. Although, it does not sound good for those who don't bear fruit.

Matthew Chapter 18 starts with Jesus describing the upside down kingdom where the last are first (v.1-5), Jesus warns of offenses (v.6-9), the parable of the lost sheep (v.10-14), teaching about a sinning Brother (v.15-20), then we come to the parable of the Unforgiving Servant (v. 21-35). I urge you to read the entire chapter 18 of Matthew. In this parable, Jesus tells of a Master that forgives the very large debt of a servant (v. 21-27). Then the servant goes to a fellow servant and demands payment of a very small debt owed himself. He has the fellow servant put in prison (v. 28-29). After this the Master finds out what he did and punishes him (v. 30-34). *“delivered him to the torturers”*. Then finally in Matthew 18:35 (NKJV). ³⁵*“So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”*

This is hard scripture for us to hear, but Jesus is very clear. If you have unforgiveness in your heart then God will turn you over to the torturers. The word in Greek is *“basanistais”* (bas-an-is-tace') which comes from the root word *basanizo'* (bas-an-id'-zo) and it literally means tormenting trial by torture. So, I have to ask the question. Can a *“believer”* be unforgiving? If so, then by Jesus' own words, the Father will turn him or her over to be tortured. This kind of torture looks very much like the description of Hell. But I'll let you decide.

Matthew chapter 25 begins with two parables Foolish Bridesmaids (v. 1-13) and Parable of the Talents (v. 14 -30). Then Jesus talks about the Son of Man Judging the Nations (v. 31-46). This is a favorite scripture of mine. Jesus lists things people did or did not do. Those that did receive *“eternal life”* and those that did not *“everlasting punishment”*. Please read all of Chapter 25, Jesus is showing us the importance of readiness, stewardship and the cost of failing to serve others. I believe this scripture is very hard to interpret within the constraints of the *“Once Saved, Always Saved”* doctrine but these scriptures do appear to support our other perspective about relationship building.

That concludes the passages from Matthew and the parallels in Luke and Mark. So far these verses are appearing not to support *“Once Saved, Always Saved”*, but of course these are the parables that detractors of *“Once Saved, Always Saved”* most often use. Let’s finish all the gospel passages before we evaluate them as a whole.

Luke chapter 9 is packed full of amazing scripture. Starting with Jesus sending out the twelve (v. 1-8), feeding the five thousand (v. 10-17), Jesus predicts his death (v. 21-27, 43-45), Mount of transfiguration (v. 28-36), stories of healing and others. Then starting in verse 57 Jesus tells of the cost of discipleship concluding with this warning Luke 9:62 (NKJV) *“**But Jesus said to him, ‘No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.’**”*

There are a lot of interpretations of this verse. But it seems clear Jesus is talking about those who claim to be a follower or *“put his hand on the plow”*, and who are not committed to him or *“looking back”*. This seems to say only fully committed disciples are fit for the kingdom of God. The NIV bible uses *“not fit for service”*. Without belaboring this scripture, Jesus requires our full commitment if we are to be *“fit for the kingdom of God.”*

John Chapter 15 is large block of Jesus’ teachings. Beginning with the True Vine (v.1-8), Love and Joy Perfected (v.8-17), World’s Hatred and the coming rejection (v.18-27). John 15:1-8 (NKJV) *“**I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.**”*

*“**I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.**”*

Abide is not a word we normally use in modern English. Most modern translations use the word *“remain”* instead *“abide”*. The Greek words in these verses are *meinēte (men'-ēte)*, *meinē (men'-ē)*, or *menōn (men'-on)*. They all have basically the same meaning, to stay, abide or remain. The message is very clear, if you are a disciple of Jesus you will have fruit. If you don’t produce fruit, you can be cut off and cast out.

John 15:9-17 (NKJV) *“**As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are My friends if you do**”*

whatever I command you. ¹⁵No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. ¹⁷These things I command you, that you love one another.

Jesus is defining what He means by abide or remain. Translations like the NIV and NLT state in v. 10 *“remain in my love”*. This speaks about a continual relationship, remaining in His love or abiding in His love. You have to tie the True Vine story in v. 1-8 with how Jesus is defining what it means to abide or remain. *“if you keep My commandments, you will abide”*.

If you believe *“Once Saved, Always Saved”*, then you have to say these last few scriptures have nothing to do with salvation. I have heard them explained by saying those that did not abide or remain, were insincere converts. They never really believed. I personally cannot accept this perspective. The scriptures don't talk about insincere conversion or people who don't really believe. Abide or remain sounds like something you have and need to hold on to, not insincere belief versus sincere belief.

Those that don't believe *“Once Saved, Always Saved”*, they simply say, if you don't abide and follow Jesus then why would you expect the reward.

Lord Jesus. We love you. Thank you for your teachings in these scriptures. Speak to each of us with the message you want us to hear. I pray in your name Jesus, Amen.

Let me leave you with this today. This walk through some of the Parables of Jesus appear to be consistent in theme and message. Remain, Follow, Endure, Service, Commitment, Faithfulness, Fruit. These are not events but ongoing activities. Each appear to come with an **“IF”**. But it's still up to you how you will reconcile these verses.

And Lastly what is *“apostasy or falling away.”* Several of the scriptures we have read in these sessions address this including the Parable of the True Vine and the Parable of the Sower and many others. Our answer to this will in the end depend on how we define “belief” and “relationship”.

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table today, I hope you'll join me for the rest of the series “Always Saved” as we dig into the Bible to test the doctrine of *“Once Saved, Always Saved”*.

You can email me comments. See you next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.

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