

22T05e Always Saved (Part 5) *supporting Epistles*

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've been exploring, "Is this doctrine Biblical"? Another way this is commonly said is "*Eternal Security*".

Today in Part 5 of our series, we are going to concentrate on the New Testament Epistles which people consider to be supporting the doctrine of "*once saved, always saved*".

- Romans 5:1-21, 8:37-39, 10:9-10,
- Ephesians 1:13-14, 2:8-13,
- Hebrews 7:25,

I believe we need to look at the big picture of scripture and resolve to an understanding based on the full context of scripture, not use specific scriptures to support our views. Today, I'm going to challenge the "*once saved, always saved*" doctrine. We will look at each scripture passages 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.

Remember to think about two questions,

- Do I have free will?
- What does believing in Jesus require of us?

Before we start looking at Romans, a little background is necessary. Paul is writing to the Church in Rome. He is talking to "believers". This is a very high level outline of Romans,

- Justification By Faith
- Salvation is Freedom from (Wrath; Sin; the Law; Death)
- The Transformed Life (Conduct, Authority, Fellow Man, Weak Brethren)

Romans Chapter 5-8 are addressing the result of salvation which is Freedom from wrath, sin, the law and death. Starting with Romans 5:1-5 (NKJV) *¹Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations,*

knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; ⁴and perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Paul makes clear we are justified by faith to have peace with God through the Lord Jesus. And “*faith into this Grace*”. How we unpack this will depend on our perspective on the “*once saved, always saved*” doctrine. But regardless of your perspective, faith in Jesus is how we are justified and only by the Grace of God.

Let’s read on, Roman 5:6-11(NKJV) *⁶For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. ⁸But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹Much more then, having now been **justified by His blood**, we shall be **saved from wrath through Him**. ¹⁰For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall **be saved by His life**. ¹¹And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.*

Paul states again we are justified by the Blood of Christ, saved by His life. Let’s continue with Romans 5:12-21 (NKJV) *²Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned— ¹³(For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. ¹⁴Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. ¹⁵But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the **gift by the grace** of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. ¹⁶And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. ¹⁷For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) ¹⁸Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the **free gift came to all men**, resulting in justification of life. ¹⁹For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous. ²⁰Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, ²¹so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Paul is stressing that salvation is a gift of grace, a free gift to all men. Let me say that again, “a free gift to all men”. This seems to say that the gift of grace came to all men not just those that believe. But obviously, we have to accept the gift to receive it. Again, let’s continue in Romans 6:1-4 (NKJV) *¹What shall we say then? **Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?** ²**Certainly not!** How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into*

Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

This is a passage we need to reconcile. I think Paul is pretty clear that we can't intentionally continue to sin and just rely on grace. *"Certainly Not"*. We should walk our talk. I find it difficult to reconcile this from the *"once saved, always saved"* perspective. Paul continues in Romans 6:23(NKJV) ²³For the wages of sin is death, but the **gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

The question we have to ask is how do we get the "free gift of God". Then later in Romans 8:1(NKJV) ¹*There is therefore now no condemnation to those **who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*** and 8:37-39(NKJV) ³⁷*Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

Verse 39 is one of those that *"once saved, always saved"* doctrine supporters point to as proof. Let me paraphrase it, Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Does God love the unbeliever? Does God love the wicked person? Did Jesus love the Jews who rejected him and tried him? Did Jesus love the Romans who crucified Him? Well yes is the answer to all of these questions. He would not be God if He could turn on and off one of His character traits which is love. God so loved the world. God does not wish that any man perish and I can go on. Nothing can separate us from the Love of God, not even Hell but that does not mean we all get salvation. Additionally, Paul talks about those is Christ walk according to the Spirit not the flesh. This is very clearly saying you can not be in Christ Jesus and be living as a non-Christian. No matter what you have said and done in the past, if you are not walking with God, then you are apart from God. I think this means you do not have salvation if you are intentionally living a sinful life.

Romans Chapters 9-11 addresses the scope of salvation being for both Jew and Gentile. Romans 10:9-13 (NKJV) ^{8b} *But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): ⁹that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." ¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. ¹³For **"whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."***

This is another scripture that those supporting the doctrine of *"once saved, always saved"* point to as clear. But those that don't support *"once saved, always saved"* say

not so fast what about the full context of Romans and the Gospels. Remember Paul is writing to Christians in Rome. His readers are already following Jesus.

So, let's look a little more closely at Romans to get a better perspective of the context Paul was writing.

- Romans 2:6-8, *“according to his deeds”, “eternal life for those who seek”, “self-seeking and do not obey the truth”.*
- Romans 5:1- **free gift came to all men**
- Romans 6:23, continue sinning so Grace can abound, NO
- Romans 8, do not walk by flesh, God loves you
- Romans 10:9-10, “Whoever calls on the Lord is saved”
- Romans 11:11-31 “Do not be haughty” or proud.

This does not look like a one-time choice. In my own words, Yes salvation is a free gift available to all men who do not walk according to the flesh but call on the lord. But don't be proud as to sin willfully and perceive to have grace to cover all your sins. Because if God cut-off others for unbelief so too, will He you. (paraphrased from Romans 11:19-24)

If you believe *“once saved, always saved”*, then why does Paul warn us that we can be cut off.

Now we are going to look at Ephesians. Before we start Ephesians, a little background is necessary. Paul is writing to the Church in Ephesus. This is a church he planted, he is talking to people he knows, they are “believers”. This is a very high level outline of Ephesians is,

- Spiritual Possessions In Christ
- Spiritual Position In Christ
- Responsibilities In Christ

Ephesians 1:13-14 (NKJV) *¹³In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, **having believed, you were sealed** with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*

The word translated “believed” is again from the Greek root word “pistis” meaning to faith, belief, trust, confidence; fidelity, faithfulness. The word translated as “you were sealed” is the Greek word “esphragisthēte” (es frag-ece' thē-te) from the root word “sphragis (sfrag-ece'”) meaning a seal, signet ring, the impression of a seal, that which the seal attests, the proof. Or you could say your proof is your faithfulness.

Ephesians 2:8-13 (NKJV) *⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that **not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,** ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

*¹⁰For we are His workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.***

Ephesians is often summed up as “not of works lest we boast”. But if this is all, then why does Paul end this phrase with a warning, “that we should walk in them”. Those not supporting “**once saved, always saved**”, just continue the phrase “we are saved by grace, not of works lest we boast, created for good works we should do”.

Let’s look at an epistle not written by Paul or at least most scholars don’t think he wrote it. We don’t actually know since the author is not stated.

Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians, so keep in mind the intended audience as you read. This is a very high level outline of Hebrew,

- Superiority of Christ
- Superiority of New Covenant
- Exhortations that Result

Hebrews Chapter 7 is stressing the superiority of the priesthood of Jesus. Hebrews 7:22-28 (NKJV) *²²by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant. ²³Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. ²⁴But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. ²⁵Therefore **He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him**, since He always lives to make intercession for them. ²⁶For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; ²⁷who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. ²⁸For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.*

So how did you interpret the epistles we just read. What about our two different 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.

I’ll leave that up to you.

Lord Jesus. You are the one I love above all else. Thank you for wanting me and loving me, even though nothing I can do will ever deserve your Love. Lord guide our study so it glorifies you Lord. Provide us with the wisdom to tell the difference between your message and the other voice telling us what to believe and how to believe. I love you Lord Jesus and I pray in your name Lord Jesus, Amen.

The three Epistles which we just studied are the most often quoted as supporting “*once saved, always saved*”. Romans which includes many warnings for “self-seeking”, “pride”, and “willfully sinning” and Ephesians which stresses that we are saved by grace unto good works. And Finally, Hebrews, which reminds us Christ is superior to everything or anyone else we know of, so come to Him.

If you think the doctrine “*once saved, always saved*” is NOT TRUE, then you can interpret all of these scriptures literally within the context of the scriptures. However, if we are to believe the “*once saved, always saved*” doctrine then the interpretation of these scriptures requires us to categorize sections of these epistles as required for salvation and those which are guidance for living but do not impact salvation.

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table today, I hope you’ll join us for the rest of the series “always saved” as we dig into the Bible to test the doctrine of “*once saved, always saved*”.

Email me comments and feedback. Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.