

How to Never Fall
Part III
September 22, 2013
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2Peter 1:10-11

- 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for **if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:**
- 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In Part II of ‘How to Never Fall’ that I preached two weeks ago primarily to those who know for sure that they are saved, I made this statement: “I trust that you are enough of a Bible student to know that Christians do not lose their salvation. When the Bible speaks of a Christian falling, it speaks of varying degrees of damage and destruction to the Kingdom and to ourselves and to those we love brought about by the consequences of our sins.”

Today in Part Three, we are going to go back to Verse 10 of our text and pick up and include all those as well who may not be quite so sure they are going to heaven.

Let me say to you as boldly as I know how: “It is NOT enough to think you are going to

heaven.” “It is not enough to hope you are going to heaven.”

Our God commands us that we make sure we are going to heaven!

2Peter 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure:

1John 5:13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life...

1Thessalonians 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

2Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

There are a lot of people, maybe some of you, who will have ‘your best life now’ and you will ‘become a better you’ because ‘it’s your time’ and for you ‘every day will be like Friday’...and then one day when you close your eyes in death; what you see before you will cause everything you have lived for to become meaningless:

What will you see when death overtakes you?

I am going to read for you what the Jews have been taught from their very beginning about life after death:

NOW as to Hades, wherein the souls of the righteous and unrighteous are detained, it is necessary to speak of it. Hades is a place in the world not regularly finished; a subterraneous region, wherein the light of this world does not shine;

In this region there is a certain place set apart, as a lake of unquenchable fire, whereinto we suppose no one hath hitherto been cast; but it is prepared for a day afore-determined by God, in which one righteous sentence shall deservedly be passed upon all men.

For there is one descent into this region, at whose gate we believe there stands an archangel with an host; which gate when those pass through that are conducted down by the angels appointed over souls, they do not go the same way; but the just are guided to the right hand, and are led with hymns, sung by the angels appointed over that place, unto a region of light, in which the just have dwelt from the beginning of the world; not constrained by necessity, but ever enjoying the prospect of the good things they see, and rejoice in the expectation of those new enjoyments which will be peculiar to every one of them, and esteeming those things beyond what we have here; with whom there is no place of toil, no burning heat, no piercing cold, nor are any briars there; but the countenance of the just, which they see, always smiles upon them, while

they wait for that rest and eternal new life in heaven, which is to succeed this region. This place we call The Bosom of Abraham.

But as to the unjust, they are dragged by force to the left hand by the angels allotted for punishment, no longer going with a good-will, but as prisoners driven by violence; to whom are sent the angels appointed over them to reproach them and threaten them with their terrible looks, and to thrust them still downwards. Now those angels that are set over these souls drag them into the neighborhood of hell itself; who, when they are hard by it, continually hear the noise of it, and do not stand clear of the hot vapor itself; but when they have a near view of this spectacle, as of a terrible and exceeding great prospect of fire, they are struck with a fearful expectation of a future judgment, and in effect punished thereby: and not only so, but where they see the place [or choir] of the fathers and of the just, even hereby are they punished; for a chaos deep and large is fixed between them; insomuch that a just man that hath compassion upon them cannot be admitted, nor can one that is unjust, if he were bold enough to attempt it, pass over it.

To these [the unjust] belong the unquenchable fire, and that without end, and a certain fiery worm, never dying, and not destroying the body, but continuing its eruption out of the body with never-ceasing grief: neither will sleep give ease to these men, nor will the night afford them comfort; death will not free them from their punishment, nor will the interceding prayers of their kindred profit them;

for the just are no longer seen by them, nor are they thought worthy of remembrance.

What I have just read to you are a few excerpts from the writings of Flavius Josephus. He was a Jewish historian; a very religious and zealous Jew, but not a Christian; at least not at the time of this writing.

What he is passing along to us are the teachings of the prophets of God passed down through many generations of the Jews.

One might hope these were nothing more than Jewish fables; except that most of this description was corroborated by Jesus Himself in the New Testament, making this the most detailed and complete description of what comes after death that exists.

We learn that the Bosom of Abraham is now uninhabited because Christ descended there after the crucifixion and brought out the just, taking them to heaven itself.

1Peter 3:18-19

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

Ephesians 4:8-9

- 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.
- 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? ...

That left side of Hades, however, grows in population daily!

Compare Jesus' own description of Hades:

Luke 16:19-26

- 19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:
- 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,
- 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.
- 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;
- 23 And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.
- 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

- 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.
- 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

Jesus said also in **Mark 9:43-44**

- 43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:
- 44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Do you still think these are just Jewish fables?

You will find out; God's advice is that you find out now while something can be done about it!

What we have read is what sinners deserve, it is what I deserve, it is what you deserve; Jesus died to save us from what we deserve!

I believe in having a great life now. I love teaching God's principles of success and I especially rejoice in seeing New Believers come to experience God's blessing in their lives.

But look; solving your problems and your heartaches and fixing your relationships and your finances and the various crises that come along - compared to eternity - is like a cold compared to cancer!

You need to KNOW for sure that you are born again; saved; redeemed; justified; in Christ and going to Heaven!

If there is one thing I understand; if there is one field or doctrine I am expert in perhaps more so than anyone you might know, it is soteriology - the doctrine of salvation - or how to know you are going to heaven.

I try to always give you only God's opinion rather than my own; and always adjust my own to match God's.

So you hope you are saved; you think you are saved; you are pretty sure you are saved?

In my expert opinion, the only people going to heaven who do not **know for sure** they are going to heaven before they die; are little unaccountable babies and those who are mentally the same.

I am telling you as a friend who loves you because Jesus loves you; if you are not sure you are going to heaven, **you are not going**...and you need, above every other need in your life to do something about it, right now, while you can.

God commands us all to make our **calling** and **election sure**: first of all:

I. Consider what is sure.

A. So you feel like you are OK.

1. Are your feelings sure?
2. **Jeremiah 17:9** The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?
3. The Bible says your heart cannot be trusted; do you agree?
4. OK then, what is your track record like?
5. Have you ever believed something strongly and were just so sure of something in your heart and then had it end up deceiving you? Maybe like that person you fell in love with or maybe married or that ocean front property in Arizona you bought?
6. You need something a lot more dependable than your feelings to know you are going to heaven!

B. What you need is the Word of God!

1. The Word of God is the only sure foundation there is!
2. All I can do with the time I have today is tell you what the Bible says about this.
3. But if you will allow us, we will privately show you the evidence; mountains of it that prove beyond any doubt that you can implicitly trust what the Bible says.
4. Peter, who heard the literal voice of God says the scriptures are more sure than even the voice of God!

2Peter 1:18-21

- 18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.
- 19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy...
- 20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture [the written Word] is of any private interpretation.
- 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but **holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.**

5. The written Word of God is our sure foundation!

2Timothy 2:15-19

- 15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the **word of truth**.
- 16 But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.
- 17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;
- 18 Who concerning **the truth** have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.
- 19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure...

6. John said: **1John 5:13** These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life...

7. There is only one way to know for sure you are saved; you must compare what you have done to be saved with what the Bible says you must do to be saved: if they match, you know and have it in writing from God that you are saved; if they do not match you know you need to be saved.

8. And by the way; there is no scripture in the Bible anywhere that tells you to pray and ask Jesus into your heart in order to be saved!

Next:

II. Consider your calling.

A. *This calling of which you are to make sure, is your invitation from the Lord.*

1. klēsis

klay'-sis

From a shorter form of [G2564](#); an *invitation* (figuratively): - calling.

2. Have you been invited into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior?

You don't know? Let me read it to you:

3. Jesus says come:

Matthew 11:28-30

28 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

4. The Spirit and the Bride say come:

Revelation 22:16-17

16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let

him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

5. If you are still not sure, let me settle it for you: "On behalf of the head of this Church, Jesus Christ, I, His messenger, hereby invite you to go to heaven with the rest of us."

B. The fact that you are here listening to this invitation is in itself evidence that you are called; 'invited' into the glorious kingdom of our Lord.

1. This is an invitation you do not want to turn down; you have no guarantee there will ever be another one.

2. Does not the Holy Spirit Himself speak to your heart when I share what Jesus did for you on the cross; how He died in your place; how He took your sin upon Himself; how He took your sins to the grave; how He rose from the dead in victory over sin and death and hell and the grave; can you not feel the power and presence of God within you; inviting you to come to Jesus?

3. Oh, yes; you have been called!

Next:

III. Consider your election.

A. *The Bible has a lot to say about 'election' or the elect.*

1. In the Old Testament and New, there are more than 25 references to the words 'elect', or 'election', with many more references using the synonym 'chosen'.

2. This word means:

eklogē

ek-log-ay'

From [G1586](#); (divine) **selection** (abstractly or concretely): - chosen, election.

'Elect' simply means selected or chosen.

3. Most of these references speak of God having chosen Jesus or us.

1Peter 1:1-2

- 1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,
- 2 **Elect** according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

1Peter 2:6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, **elect**, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

Romans 8:28-30

- 28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.
- 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
- 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

B. What does divine election mean?

1. God having chosen us and saved us and provided for us is done, as we just read, according to His foreknowledge.
2. Since He; being God, foreknows who will trust Him and who will not; He has chosen various wonderful things for those whom He knows will place their trust in Jesus.
3. Verse 10 in our text, however, speaks of a different selection:

2Peter 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure:

4. Based on the structure of this sentence, **you** are to give diligence to make **your** calling and

whose election? That's right, **your** election; sure.

7. This verse is not talking about God selecting you; it is talking about your selecting Jesus!

8. God has called you, He has invited you; you must now choose; you must elect to place your trust in Jesus!

In Conclusion:

What's it going to be? Do you understand enough to be saved?

Are you confident that the Bible really is the Word of God; true and reliable through and through? (If not, we can help you with that.)

Do you understand that the Jesus of the Bible is God in flesh and that He paid for all your sins with His own blood?

If so, then you understand enough to be saved.

Here is how sinners get saved:

Ephesians 1:12-13

12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

13 In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye

believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,

Once you understand the gospel, you place your trust in Jesus to save you; and that's it!