

Chapter 9

ITS HOLINESS OR HELL

88 *WHAT ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE THAT STATES IF A RIGHTEOUS MAN TURNS FROM HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS AND STARTS SINNING HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL BE FORGOTTEN? Ezekiel 3:20*

“When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered.”

Only the reasoning powers of the mind of Christ can unravel the mystery of our godliness, so come let us reason together with Christ’s reasoning. (Eph. 3:3-4) The truth of the matter is that there is only one righteous man, “Jesus Christ the righteous!” (1 John 2:1) This is why the Scriptures refer to Jesus as “the Lord our righteousness.” (Jeremiah 23:6, 1 Cor. 1:30) Other than he:

“There is none righteous no not one.” (Rom. 3:10)

For:

“There is not a just man upon the earth who doeth good and sinneth not.” (Eccl. 7:20)

Therefore, people are not made righteous by the content of their character before or after salvation. At salvation, the Lord becomes our righteousness for he is the only righteousness any believer has, and he is the only one who cannot sin and thus turn from his righteousness. (1 John 3:9, 1 Cor. 1:30)

This Scriptures further states: “his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered.” First of all, God help the man who wants the Lord to remember the works of “righteousness which he hath done.” For we are saved:

“not by works of **righteousness which we have done**, but according to his mercy he saved us.” (Titus 3:5)

For:

“ALL of **our righteousnesses** are as filthy rags.” (Isa. 64:6)

Therefore, pity the man whose righteousness the Lord does remember, because the Lord esteems it as filth, in comparison! (Isa. 64:6) Since the Lord is our righteousness, believers should know that our righteousness is forever! (Isa. 51:6)

Isaiah wrote that none of us are righteous. Therefore, the only way the born again could possibly lose their salvation would be if Jesus Christ, our righteousness, turned from his righteousness and committed a sin. Only then would our righteousness, which is Christ, be forgotten. This cannot happen since “he cannot sin, because he is born of God.” (1 John 3:9) As believers, our faith in Christ is counted for righteousness, and Jesus finishes our faith for the salvation of our souls. He becomes “the Lord our righteousness.” (Heb. 12:2, 1 Cor. 1:30)

Jehovah Tsidkenu in the Old Testament is revealed as Christ “our righteousness” in the New, and he went on record stating, “ I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” (Jeremiah 23:6, 1 Cor. 1:30) Hence, there is no chance our righteousness will be forgotten, because it is Jesus Christ the righteousness of God himself. (Jer. 33:16) The topic Scripture applied to Old Testament saints, not New Testament believers whose righteousness is the Lord himself, righteousness that cannot be abolished, according to Isaiah 51:6. The righteousness of God is only obtained by faith in Jesus Christ. It is not supported or aborted by human effort: otherwise, we could and would lose our salvation. (Rom. 4:5, 7:25, Isa. 64:6) Order audio supplement: *How Righteous are You?*

89 *THERE IS NOTHING RIGHTEOUS ABOUT CHRISTIANS EXCEPT CHRIST IN THEM, AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS CANNOT BE REMOVED. Rom. 3:10*

“There is none righteous, no, not one.”

Show me a man who believes born again believers can lose their salvation, and I will show you a man who believes salvation is by works. Although Christians should strive to achieve high moral character, our character is not counted for righteousness. (Rom. 4:5) Nevertheless, many born again Christians adopt the attitude:

“Stand not near me for I am holier than thou.” (Isa. 65:5)

Jesus rebuked those who “trusted to themselves that they were righteous and despised others.” (Luke 18:9) In our present generation, many Christians have forgotten that according to Scripture, we are counted righteous based on our faith, not our character. (2 Pet. 1:9, Rom. 4:3) The Galatian and Corinthian saints forgot this and Paul called them absolute fools for boasting (glorying) in the nobleness of their human efforts. (2 Cor. 11:18-19) For “the flesh profits nothing.” (John 6:63) God considers the righteousness of our flesh equivalent to filth as it relates to the gift of salvation. (Isa. 64:6, James 1:21) The born again who try to show they are righteous by their sturdy character, sunny disposition, and winning ways are either misinformed or classic hypocrites, because none of these things contribute in any way to their salvation or righteousness. (Isa. 64:6, Rom. 4:5)

In Paul’s day, there were Christians who “desired to make a fair show in the flesh” so people would think they achieved righteousness by the way they lived, and they could glory (boast) in their flesh by feeling holier than others. (Gal. 6:12) Today, many believers resort to this same hypocrisy, based on a tradition that says Christians are righteous because we adhere to a strict moral code to refrain from sin. Many Christians have accepted this as a condition of salvation because the natural mind refuses to endure the sound doctrine that, although we are to be as good as we can be, only “faith is counted for righteousness.” Behavior doesn’t count! (Rom. 4:5) Mohandas Gandhi’s behavior and conduct was far superior to most Christians today. Yet, if he did not accept Christ as his savior he is as lost as any non-believer.

Legalists have a severe misconception that righteousness and sin are behaviors, when they are not. Righteousness and sin are *natures*, not behaviors. Righteousness is *God’s divine nature* born in you at the new birth in the form of the hidden new man “Christ in you.” However, sin is *Adam’s human nature*, dwelling in you since your birth into this world. Human

nature is the nature of sin, the old man. The law was given to reveal to you that your human nature, the nature of sin, is “exceedingly sinful” and condemned to death. Our human nature forever remains a servant of sin, as Jesus stated, “that which is born of the flesh is flesh.” This is true even after Christ is born in you at the second birth.

Therefore, praise God for Jehovah-Tsidkenu which means “the Lord *our righteousness*,” for without him, none of us are righteous, “no not one!” (Jer. 23:6, Rom. 3:10) The only way a believer could possibly lose his or her salvation is for “Jesus Christ the righteous” to lose his righteousness. For he is Jehovah-Tsidkenu “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” (Jer. 23:6)

90 THE BORN AGAIN REMAIN PERMANENTLY HOLY BECAUSE THEIR FIRSTFRUIT IS PERMANENTLY HOLY. Rom. 11:16

“For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.”

Adam was the firstfruit of mankind, and he was not holy. For it was by Adam’s “disobedience that many were made sinners.” (Rom. 5:19) Adam’s dietary sin was the “little leaven that leavened the whole lump” of the human race which made us all unholy. (1 Cor. 5:6-7) Only by the new birth are we placed in “a new lump,” better known as the body of Christ. Jesus became the firstfruit of the redeemed by his resurrection. For:

“now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept... For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive... But every man in his own order. Christ the firstfruit, then them that are Christ’s at his coming.” (1 Cor. 15:20-23)

Since our “firstfruit” is holy, we, the redeemed, are also holy. For:

“If the firstfruit (Christ) be holy, then the lump (the body of Christ) is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.” (Rom 11:16)

Jesus declared the born again are “the branches,” but is he the root? (John 15:5) Yes. In the Revelation, Jesus announced:

“I am the root... and if the root be holy, so are the branches.”
(Rev. 22:16, Rom. 11:16)

Jesus is “a root out of dry ground,” and we are “partakers of his holiness.” (Heb. 12:10, Isa. 53:2) Our holiness is based on our “firstfruit,” Jesus Christ, and not on our human efforts that are counted as rags of filth. (Ps. 39:5, Isa. 64:6) Christians cannot manufacture holiness and there is

no true holiness apart from what Christ supplies. (Eph. 4:24) Paul wrote that it's only through the new birth that:

“You have your fruit unto **holiness**, and
the end everlasting life.” (Rom. 6:22)

Christ alone is “your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life.” (Rom. 6:22) Jesus is the only true holiness a Christian possesses. He is Christ in you, the hope of glory “without which no man can see the Lord.” (Eph. 4:24, Heb. 12:14)

Note: Although behavior does not make us holy, we are instructed to “be in behavior as becometh holiness.” This is a strict instruction in righteousness, to which believers are to adhere, but is not a condition by which we attain salvation or maintain our salvation. (Rom. 10:9-10) If being holy (sinless) was a condition of salvation, then you would have had to be holy before being saved! In the sight of God, the new man of Christ in us is our “righteousness and *true holiness*,” not our behavior. (Eph. 4:24) For “every man at his best state is altogether vanity walking in a vain show.” (Ps. 39:5-6) Without Jesus “no man can see the Lord” because he is our “*HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD*.” (Ex 39:30) Born again Christians are to order their behavior as becometh holiness, “for it is good and profitable unto men,” not unto salvation. (Titus 2:3, 8) Our holiness is ascribed to us by the new man born in us at the new birth, “created in righteousness and true holiness.” (Eph. 4:24) Order the audio supplement: *Without Holiness No Man Can See God. Are You Holy?*

*91 BELIEVERS WHO ATTAIN TO THE LEVEL OF BEING TRANSFORMED, TEND
TO DOUBT THE SALVATION OF THE BORN AGAIN WHO HAVE NOT. Rom. 12:2*

“be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind”

Many Christians adamantly deny the salvation of those who are born again, yet their earthly lives show no sign of being transformed (changed). These people hold the notion that transformation takes place at salvation, when it does not. (Rom. 12:1-2) If the new birth automatically transformed our lifestyles, then Paul would not have written endless lists of sins for the born again believer to “put off.” Paul constantly instructed born again Christians to stop indulging in deeds such as fornication (premarital-sex), uncleanness, inordinate affection (perversity), and evil concupiscence (sexual lust). (Col. 3:5) Yet scores of Christians believe anyone who engages in such practices was not saved in the first place. **Unfortunately, such scoffers have not learned the difference between being born again and being transformed!** The average believer thinks being transformed is the acid test of whether someone is truly born again, and this is an all too common misconception. Paul was not addressing hard-core sinners, but blood-washed, born again believers who were not transformed (changed) by the renewing of their minds. (Rom. 12:2) If the new birth automatically transformed lifestyles, then Paul would have told these people to get born again, again!

The Apostle Paul had no illusions concerning the existence of non-transformed Christians. This is why he cautioned Timothy, his minister in training, not to ordain Christians into the ministry who were “given to wine” (alcohol addiction) or “greedy of filthy lucre” (money-grubbing). Young Timothy was also instructed not to ordain saints who were brawlers (people who love to fight) or

those who had poor reputations among those outside Christ. (1 Tim. 3:3-7) Paul understood that the birth of Christ in someone did not eliminate that person's hang-ups or shortcomings. **Only being "transformed by the renewing of the mind" improves one's character, whereas being redeemed does not! (Rom. 12:2)** Unfortunately, many born again believers have not been transformed. Titus was another minister counseled by Paul not to admit Christians into the ministry who were "soon angry" (hot tempered), self-willed, (contentious) riotous, unruly, and disobedient to the "instructions in righteousness." (Titus 1:7) Notice the born again have the propensity for all of the above. It's a matter of record that Paul commanded Christians at the Church of Corinth to stop fornicating! (1 Cor. 5:1) Not once did Paul ever doubt their salvation. He, now, desired their transformation. (Rom. 12:2) Order the audio supplement: *The Difference Between Being Born Again and after Being Born Again Growing in Grace.*

Peter was another Apostle who understood that unless the born again were transformed through growth in grace, they would be susceptible to evil influences (In 2 Pet. 1:5-7, James 3:16) This is why Peter warned believers, whose lifestyle had not progressed "according to godliness" to:

"Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters." (1 Peter 4:15)

Peter was not talking to hardened criminals, but to the redeemed! In the event a Christian was caught up in such unsavory works, the Apostle Paul outlined specific instructions detailing how to deal with "such an one." Paul cautioned the saints not to count the person as an enemy, writing:

I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner with such an one not to eat. Put away from among yourselves that **wicked person**. If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy but admonish him as a brother. (1 Cor. 5:9-13, 2 Thes. 3:13-14)

Is this indicating that born again believers can be steeped in *wickedness*? Yes! Remember God's words:

"If my people which are called by my name turn from their *wicked* ways...." (2 Chron. 7:14)

Unfortunately, according to our Maker, many Christians have various "wicked ways" because they have not been transformed by the renewal of their minds. Salvation does not renew the mind. Salvation redeems the soul unto God while its mind is yet conformed to the world in its thinking. (1 Cor. 3:3-4, Rom. 12:1-3) It is only when you "apply your heart unto wisdom" will you come to "the beginning of wisdom," that being the fear of the Lord that causes you to depart from evil. (Prov. 1:7, 16:6) This wisdom transforms the character, whereas accepting Christ as our savior does

not. If a believer engages in ungodly activities, we are forbidden to tell him that he is no longer saved. For that would be to count him as an enemy. (2 Thes. 3:15) Our responsibility is to warn him as a brother in order to restore him to the will of God and the fellowship of the saints. Our brotherhood remains intact with him because of birth – the new birth of Christ in him as well as in us, and we have his promise that he will never leave or forsake us.

Many of our weak brothers who are not transformed are being told they are no longer saved, causing many people to think they have lost their salvation and are no longer redeemed. (Heb. 9:12) Unlike many Christians today, Peter, James, and Paul had no illusions that a sinful lifestyle is automatically transformed at conversion. Our new birth is only the starting gate. A transformed lifestyle is accomplished only by adhering to the doctrine, reproof, and the correction and instruction in Scripture by one's purposeful pursuit of growth in grace. According to Scripture, **the grace of God:**

“teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lust, we should live soberly, righteously; and godly, in this present world.” (Titus 2:12)

Without growth in grace, the character remains conformed to the world, in ungodliness and worldly lust. Peter understood that godliness does not automatically accompany salvation, so he wrote that godliness must be added to the character of the born again. Peter instructs born again believers to:

“add to your faith, virtue, and to virtue knowledge:
and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance
patience; and to patience **godliness**; and to godliness
brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, charity.”
(2 Peter 1:5-7)

Many Christians deny the salvation of those who believe the gospel, but have not been transformed, into the type of people we ought to be in all holiness and godly conduct. (2 Pet. 3:11)

Not one Christian has ever received permission or authority, much less the right to declare another believer no longer saved. God has sworn on himself that he would not do this, so why would you? To deny the salvation of a believer who has not been transformed by the renewing of the mind is not Scriptural. For “the Lord knoweth those that are his;” we don't, and are foolish to presume we do. (2 Tim. 2:19)

Note: It's a great paradox that although you may be born again, your character may not be *godly*, just as being born an American does not make you *patriotic*. (2 Chron. 7:14) Godliness must be *added* to the character of the born again and it is outlined as level six on the pathway of growth in grace in 2 Peter 1:5-7. Sadly, many believers consciously avoid pressing toward this mark. For “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (2 Tim. 3:12) As you press toward the mark, godliness is a growing pain you must endure. No pain, no gain!

92 *IF YOU CAN LOSE YOUR SALVATION, WHAT ARE YOU DOING THAT'S SO GREAT THAT IT IS CAUSING YOU TO KEEP IT? Eccl. 7:20*

"For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."

Preachers who proclaim the redeemed can lose their salvation believe salvation is by works. Multitudes of Christians believe good works plus God's grace equal salvation. However, the Word of God discloses that if salvation:

be of works; then it is no longer of grace, and if it be of grace, then it is no longer of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. (Rom. 11:6)

The Bible is unmistakably clear that salvation must be either all grace or all works. There is no mixing the two, and the Bible decidedly sides with grace.

If you believe you can retain your salvation on the merits of your natural life, please tell God, the world, and myself what you are doing that is so great that it's causing you to keep it. Inquiring minds want to know! Better yet, since Solomon wrote:

“There is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not.”

What have you stopped doing that allows you to keep “so great salvation”? Answer: Absolutely nothing! So, "Let God be true," and every man who says salvation is partially by human effort "a liar." (Rom. 3:4)

We are, as legalists love to say, truly born again:

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his own mercy and grace he saved us by the washing...." (Titus. 3:5)

Legalists are like Naaman, who wanted to do some great thing to assist God in cleansing himself, rather than obey God's appointed washing instructions. That was just too *easy* for Naaman to *believe!* (2 Kings 5:13) At first Naaman scorned God's easy way, just as legalists mock the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith as cheap and ~~easy~~ ^{spitefully} calling it Easy Believism. “Verily, they have their reward.” Had Naaman tried to save his life by doing some great thing other than obeying God's washing instructions, he would have died from his leprosy. Like Naaman, legalists yearn to be cleansed by way of works, not by route of washing. (Rev. 1:5) They believe their salvation is based on works of righteousness which they have done, like moral decency or living a holy life the best they can. Although these things are commendable among men and expected of believers in their quest for discipleship after salvation, they cut no ice with God for salvation. (Titus 3:8) **FOR NO ONE, I REPEAT, NO ONE WILL GO TO HEAVEN BASED ON THE LIFE THEY LIVED ON EARTH!** For:

“Every man at his best state is altogether vanity walking in a vain show.” (Ps. 39:5)

This means your best is not good enough. It takes heaven's best to make you righteous, because no human righteousness, character, ministerial works, or right living can be exchanged for eternal life! (Matt. 7:22, Titus 3:5) Faith in Christ's work alone is the only currency God

recognizes that can "save a soul from hell and hide a multitude of sin." Nothing else will do. (Rom. 10:9-10)

Jesus proclaimed his way was easy, but many ministers have the spirit of Naaman and despise God's easy way. They want to do some hard thing, like keep the Law of Commandments to be cleansed. (Rom. 3:20) The faith that saves us must be faith in what Jesus did for us, and not in what we can do for him. The human mind, like Naaman's, spurns the simplicity of the gospel of Christ as too easy, calling it easy believism. Like Naaman, human nature yearns to do some great thing to save its soul. Therefore, Christ warned that whosoever tries to save his life shall lose it. (Mark 8:35) Leave off the way of Naaman with those who lust to do some great work to merit their salvation. For the greatest thing you can do is recognize your soul is lost, and believe Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose again to provide you with the free gift of his eternal life. (Titus 3:7) It's that easy!

Lucifer's ministers preach that salvation comes through obeying the Law of Commandments, and the itching ears of legalists love to hear this most deceitful of false doctrines. (2 Cor. 11:14-15, 2 Tim. 4:3) Jesus wants you to beware of these ministers of Satan by adhering to the basics of the KISS principle:

Keep It Simple Saints.

For no born again believer's self-produced righteousness can serve as a ticket to heaven. Nor will our righteousness serve as the provider, protector, or defender of our souls salvation. Therefore, regarding eternal salvation, do not rely on your works but upon God's Word. William Shakespeare, humanity's most celebrated pen, wrote his greatest prose when he penned his last will and testament presented here in today's English:

"In the name of God, Amen. I **William Shakespeare**, of Stratford upon Avon. . . in perfect health and memory, God be praised, do make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following. That is to say, first, I commend my soul into the hands of God my creator, hoping and assuredly believing that only through the merits of Jesus Christ, my savior, to be made partaker of life everlasting, and my body to the earth from whence it was made."

Note: Since "there is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not," God provided you with the new man born of God that "sinneth not." (Eccl. 7:20, 1 John 5:18) Without him "no man can see the Lord." He is Christ in you, your only "true holiness" before God. (Eph. 4:24)