

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BEING A CHRISTIAN
“Kept By The Power Of God Through Faith”

INTRODUCTION

- A. The Christian is “saved” – Acts 2:47. The Christian “has” eternal life – JN 3:36; Cf. JN 5:24; 6:47, 54; 1 JN 5:11, 13.
- B. But heaven is yet future – 1 PE 1:3-9, and the Christian lives in “hope” of eternal life – TS 1:2; Cf. MK 10:30; RO 2:7; TS 3:7; 1 JN 2:25.
- C. There is no contradiction here. What God promises does not have to be *inevitable* to be *certain* - e.g. Josh. 6:2. Cf. HE 10:34.
- D. Because salvation in heaven is *prospective* and *conditional*, the Christian, having obtained fellowship with God, must *maintain* it — we must not only “get” saved, we must “keep” saved!

DISCUSSION

I. SATAN’S WILL: AGAINST THE CHRISTIAN - 1 PE 5:8.

- A. The Christian can sin so as to be lost - Acts 8:18-24. Cf. RO 11:22; CO. 1:23; HE 6:4-6; 10:26, 27; 2 PE 2:20-22.
 - 1. There is no scriptural distinction between sins that are “mortal” and others that are “venial.”
 - 2. There is a difference for the Christian, however, between sin “leading to death” and that “not leading to death” (1 JN 5:16, 17).
- B. The Christian is continually involved in a spiritual warfare – RO 6:12; EP 6:12.
- C. The Christian must reach forward to the goal – PH 3:12-14. A complacent Christian is a contradiction in terms. Cf. PH 2:12.
 - 1. “He conquers who endures” (Latin proverb). Cf. RE 2:10.
 - 2. The message of Hebrews is: hold out until the end! HE 2:1; 3:6, 12-14; 4:1, 11; 6:11, 12; 10:23, 35-39; 12:1, 2.

II. GOD’S WILL: FOR THE CHRISTIAN – JN 3:16-17; RO 8:31-39

- A. God is our Friend – He is on our side, willing and able to help us remain true to Him.
 - 1. God has anticipated and graciously supplied our every spiritual need. EP 1:3; 2 PE 1:3, 4, 10, 11.
 - 2. God is for us. JN 10:28-29; CO 1:5; 2 TI 4:8; 1 PE 1:4.
- B. God is our Helper – He protects and provides for our spiritual welfare.
 - 1. HE 2:11-12.
 - a. Mediator – 1 TI 2:5.
 - b. Advocate – 1 JN 2:1-2.
 - c. High Priest – HE 2:17-18.
 - d. His blood cleanses us from our sins – 1 JN 1:7-10.
 - 2. For our welfare, God does many things.
 - a. 1 CO 10:13; Cf. MT 6:13; JA 1:12-15.
 - b. Chastens us for our good – HE 12:5-11.
 - c. Helps and strengthens us – PS 28:6-7; 2 CO 12:9-10; PH 4:13; Cf. PS 46:1; 121:1-8; EP 3:16; CO 1:11.
 - 3. God provides for us.
 - a. Congregational relationship – HE 10:24-25.
 - b. Servants – EP 4:11-16.
 - c. First Day of the week – Acts 20:7; 1 CO 16:1-2; CO 3:16.
 - d. Lord’s Supper – 1 CO 11:23-26.
 - e. The Scriptures – 2 TI 3:16-17.
 - f. Prayer – PH 4:6-7.
- C. God is our Victory – 2 CH 14:11; 32:7-8.
 - 1. 1 CO 2:5; Cf. 2 CO 6:7; EP 1:19.
 - 2. Victory – 1 CO 15:57; 1 JN 2:13; 4:4.
 - 3. Confidence and boldness – EP 3:12; 1 JN 3:20-21; 4:17-18; cf. PH 4:7; HE 4:14-16.

III. THE CHRISTIAN’S FREEDOM OF WILL – 1 PE 1:5.

- A. The Christian is secure in Christ, but conditionally – PR 14:26.
 - 1. A Christian can be positive and optimistic about salvation in Christ.

- a. Assurance – 1 JN 2:28; 3:19; Cf. LK 1:4; CO 2:2; 2 TI 3:14.
 - b. Triumphant attitude of victory – 1 JN 5:4-5; RE 2:7, 1.
 - 2. Yet the Christian must not be lackadaisical about his obedience.
 - a. Unwarranted confidence must be avoided, as well as unnecessary fear. 1) God’s grace must not be presumed upon. 2) Both the warning of Hebrews and the assurance of Romans are needed. Cf. 2 PE 1:10-11.
 - b. The question is not whether God preserves the righteous, but whether the righteous can become unrighteous — it is not whether the believer is secure, but whether he can give up his faith. 1) This fact is indisputable: only the obedient go to heaven - EP 5:5-7; HE 5:9. 2) “Whoever abides in Him does not sin” (1 JN 3:4-9).
 - 3. God’s power and grace are infallible – but the Christian may refuse God’s word. We are urged PH 2:12-13; Cf. 1 PE 1:5; Jude 1, 20-21, 24-25. The person “kept” by God’s power must “keep himself” – 1 JN 5:18; Cf. JN 17:11-12.
- B. The Christian is exhorted to avail himself of God’s help in remaining faithful.
 - 1. Scriptural admonitions: Take heed -1 CO 10:12; Gird up the loins of the mind - 1 PE 1:13; Discipline self - 1 CO 9:27; Be rooted -EP 3:17; CO 2:7; cf. EP 4:1; Put on the armor of God – EP 6:10-18; Cf. RO 13:12; 1 TH 5:8; Be strong in the Lord – 2 TI 2:1; Cf. PS 31:24; Stand fast – 1 CO 16:13; Cf. PH 4:1; 1 TH 3:8; 2 TH 2:15; Resist the devil – JA 4:7; 1 PE 5:8-9; Cf. RO 12:21.
 - 2. Activities conducive to keeping saved: Daily prayer and Bible study; Association with fellow Christians; Attendance at all assemblies; Involvement in the work of the Lord, Development of usefulness; Acceptance of correction; and Repentance.
 - 3. Neglect is costly!
- C. In God’s strength, the Christian can remain faithful.
 - 1. We have been saved in hope. RO 8:24; Cf. CO 1:23; 1 JN 3:3.
 - 2. We eagerly await the return of our Lord – 1 CO 1:7-9; PH 3:20-21; 2 PE 3:12-13.
 - 3. RO 8:37 – We are “more than conquerors.”

CONCLUSION

- A. HE 2:1.
- B. It is possible to be confident that – PH 1:6.
- C. 1 PE 1:5.