
BIBLE TALK

This week we are discussing this question: **What must Christians do to stay saved?**

The Bible teaches very clearly that there are certain things that men must do to get saved and stay saved. In Acts 2:37 a great multitude of Jews asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They realized that there was something for them to do in order to receive God's saving grace. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (verse 38). According to verse 41, "They that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

Now, in summary, here is what the Jews had to do to be saved from their sins:

- They had to **BELIEVE** in Jesus.
- They had to **REPENT** of their sins.
- They had to be **IMMERSED** in water for the remission of sins.

When they did these things they were saved from their sins.

MEN CAN FALL AWAY

But do you realize that these people had to do some things to stay saved? Just because their past sins were removed did not guarantee that future sins would not affect them.

2 Peter 2:20-21

20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.

21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

Christians who turn their backs on the Lord and return to sinful living are in a worse condition than before their conversion! They would have been better to have never been saved than to be saved and fall away.

THE BIBLE PLAN FOR STAYING SAVED

But the Bible has a formula to prevent Christians from falling away. There are some things that Christians are instructed to do that will prevent them from being lost again, so let us see "what Christians must do to stay saved."

2 Peter 1:5-10

5 ... giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,
6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,
7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.
8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.
10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

Notice from this passage that staying saved is conditional. There are things the Christian has to do to stay saved. Listen carefully to this list of things the apostle Peter gives which we must do:

- 1) First there is **FAITH** which Christians must have to begin with.
- 2) To this must be added **VIRTUE**, or morality. This makes sense, because faith in Christ without morality is worthless.

- 3) To morality must be added **KNOWLEDGE**. Again, this is in logical order, because morality must come before knowledge. There are men studying the Bible and increasing in knowledge who have never developed morality and their knowledge is worthless!
- 4) To knowledge must be added **SELF-CONTROL**. This means controlling ourselves when using things that are morally right within themselves.
- 5) After self-control must come **PERSEVERANCE**. That is, we must learn to patiently continue living the Christian life in spite of any troubles, or hindrances along the way.
- 6) After perseverance must come **GODLINESS** -- that is, we must work on respecting and showing reverence for things that are holy.
- 7) After godliness comes **BROTHERLY KINDNESS**. Christians must learn first to show kindness to fellow Christians.
- 8) Finally, after brotherly kindness comes **LOVE**. That is, before we can demonstrate love toward non-Christians, we must first demonstrate it towards fellow believers, but after learning kindness toward believers, we must go on and show it towards all men.

Now, after all of these instructions the Lord's apostle tells us, "IF these things are yours and abound, you will not be barren, nor unfruitful." What does this imply? It implies that if we do not have these things, or if these qualities do not abound, then we are barren and unfruitful to the Lord! We are as unprofitable as men who have never begun to serve Him.

Again in verse 10 the inspired apostle says, "IF you do these things you will never stumble." Staying saved is a conditional thing. As long as we obey the Lord's commandments and continue to grow as He has outlined here, we will stay saved and we "make our call and election sure." But if we refuse the Lord's commandments and refuse to grow in these ways, we cannot be sure of our calling, nor of our election!

1 Timothy 4:16

16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

This passage reminds us once again that being saved is conditional. We must be careful about what we do and what doctrine we believe and we must continue in the Lord's instructions to both save ourselves and others.