



Topic:
Making My Call and Election Sure
(Understanding the Steps of Salvation)
Part 1: Introduction

*Wherefore the rather, brethren give diligence to
Make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these
things, ye shall never fall*
~ 2 Peter 1:10 (KJV) ~

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INTRODUCTION

When I came into salvation over 25 years ago, I would often hear the saints during the testimony portion of service share how the Lord had saved them from a miserable life of sin, as they would say. They would then go on to share how they were justified by faith and had peace with God; sanctified through the word of God and through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and ending their testimony with letting us know that they were baptized and filled with the Holy Ghost and that with a mighty burning fire. Now, sitting in the midst of these testifying saints and having an understanding of what they meant when they claimed, as we will call them, works of “*grace*” was not difficult at all. This is largely because in that day, the church was very conscious in teaching new converts to Christ what it truly meant to be saved and the inheritance of their salvation wrought through the shed blood of Jesus. The saints of old lived with such power over their lives and over the enemy of our soul to the point that it was common to hear of God healing and raising the dead right in your midst as the saints gathered together and prayed. As a young convert to salvation, I bless God for being surrounded by saints who walked in the fullness of the life of Christ in their life. They excited in us a desire to seek after the Lord denying ourselves of anything and anyone that would hinder us from receiving the works of grace in our life that we saw in the lives of the great cloud of witnesses that compassed us.

Recently I have been encountering Christians who, while they have embraced relationship and fellowship with the Lord, have not come into the fullness of all God has for his children. They demonstrate a level of commitment up to what they have been taught and exposed to. When asked if they can recall the moment they received the grace work of justification or the moment they received the grace work of sanctification or the moment they received the gift of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, some respond with silence while others admit that they have not been taught to this level. When I give thought to this, I am immediately reminded of the apostle Paul’s encounter with the saints he met after passing through the upper coast and arriving in Ephesus.

Acts 19:1-6 (NKJV)

And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” So they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.” And he said to them, “Into what then were you baptized?” So they said, “Into John’s baptism.” Then Paul said, “John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they

should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

To know there are Christian who have not yet experienced God’s work of grace in their lives has left me with a burden to teach what salvation is, why we need it and how to be certain we have received all the Father has ordained us to receive as we build our new life with Him.

Teaching on the steps or doctrine of salvation is a subject that’s not on many agendas today. When we come to fully understand God’s plan of salvation and the mighty blessing we receive by it, we will be able to overcome any obstacle that attempts to stand in our way. The enemy of our soul (the devil) doesn’t mind if we go to church every Sunday. He doesn’t mind if we sing on the choir or usher on the board. He doesn’t even mind if we serve the shepherd of the house. What he minds is when we are exposed to the knowledge of God to the point that he is no longer able to control our actions, moods, or determination. In his attempt to keep us in his grips, the devil strategically sets the stage for us to remain in darkness void of the knowledge of Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (KJV)

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believed not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them.

Although the apostle Paul was basically directing his words to the church at Corinth in his efforts to get them to renounce practices in their lives that were dishonest and deceitful and instead take up the ministry mantel of manifesting truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience, his words reveal the objective of the devil. If the truth of the gospel of Christ be hid, even from Christians who walk with the Lord, then we will remain in the darkness of our ignorance and thus unable to attain to the place in Christ God has ordained.

My assignment for this series study is to, with much prayer, break open the truths of God’s word to the point that those God has ordained to sit in the midst will hear and be delivered, healed, and empowered to live the fullness of God.

OUR STUDY

I sought God as to where we are to begin our study series on making our call and election as children of God sure. I am led to begin with probably the most important question ever to be asked: Why do we need salvation? While there may be some in the midst who have already reached the answer to this question, I ask your forbearance with me as I share with those who have not.

Why Do We Need Salvation?

The book of Genesis records that Adam and Eve when first created by God, were perfectly created in God’s image and after His likeness (*cf. Genesis 1:26*). God gave Adam and Eve the right and privilege to eat of every herb bearing tree in the garden with the exception of one, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which if they ate of this single tree, they would surely die (*cf. Genesis 2:16-17*). They soon fell into sin when they disobeyed God’s one command and ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We may think that this was no big deal, it was only eating of the fruit; but in fact they disobeyed and sinned

against God. In God's eyes sin is sin, no different than you and I trying to justify our sinful actions by grading them as "little sins". Whenever we do anything that violates God's Holy Word it is a sin, regardless of the size or magnitude of that sin.

After Adam and Eve's great transgression of the command of God and birthing into their lives a sinful nature, they covered themselves with figs leaves. God quickly stepped in and covered them with animal skins because their attempt to cover themselves was not acceptable unto God. From the time that Adam and Eve tried to cover themselves with fig leaves man has been trying many different avenues to cover himself in such a way that he could somehow earn his way into Heaven. All down through the ages right to the present, man has tried to earn a right into Heaven through doing good things, joining a Church, working on committees within the Church, giving of their time to charitable organization, and doing anything else to give him a sense of rightness. Sadly, many folks are resting in false hopes of these things being enough to earn them a right into Heaven someday. This is largely the result of improper understanding of the Bible, wrong teaching of the Bible within many Churches, and traditions passed down through families that many people are led astray and don't even realize it.

Romans 6:23 (KJV)

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There is nothing man can do in himself to deliver himself from the penalty of sin. Through Adam and Eve's transgression, all mankind as their descendants are birth with a sin nature. David acknowledged this in Psalm 51:5 "*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*" Only through salvation wrought through Jesus' sacrifice of his own life can man be redeemed from the curse and penalty of sin. If we are to spend eternity with our Heavenly Father, we must be the recipient of God's plan of salvation made available through His Son. The apostle Paul understood this when he quoted in Romans 3:23 "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*"

The Plan of Salvation (Redemption).

The path of salvation or redemption begins not with the decision to live a better life or to stop doing something wrong. The path of salvation begins with the realization that we cannot correct our sinful nature. To find favor with God and receive his salvation in our life, we must grasp that it's impossible to make ourselves righteous; instead, we need to depend on the sacrifice Jesus made on our behalf.

The whole Bible describes God's grand plan to be in a loving relationship with us forever. While God desires this relationship with us, He is holy and desires that we also be holy. God also understands that because of our sinful nature, we will never be holy apart from His provision. Apart from God, man stands guilty of his sins with the penalty of death or wrath of God over him.

So, in his great love for us, God wrapped himself up in flesh and came in the form of His Son Jesus Christ to this earth to teach us His ways and also to die as an acceptable and sinless sacrifice for mankind. It was through Christ's sacrifice that the penalty for the sin committed against God by mankind was paid. Jesus paid for the sin of all mankind and thus opened up the means for all to receive the needed salvation and the promise of spending eternity in Heaven. It is the heart of the Father that no man perish. John 3:16 declares "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" While it is not God's desire that any be lost, it is man's submission to the will of God's plan of salvation that will free man from the penalty of sin.

The Blessing of Salvation.

Our main scripture for this series is taken from 2 Peter 1:10 (KJV):

Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.

Incumbent upon us is the duty to make our calling and election sure. Our series scripture reference lets us know that there are things that we must do to make our calling and election sure and if we do these things, we will never fall.

After giving his salutation to those who have obtained like precious faith, the apostle Peter goes on in verse 3 of chapter 1 to let us know that through God's divine power we have been given all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. What Peter is saying is that as we come into the knowledge of God and what we have inherited, life and godliness is increased in us. In verse 4, Peter tells us of the great and precious promises we have received that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature. In other words, through the knowledge of God and what we inherited, we will be set free from the sinful nature we inherited through the sins of Adam and Eve and will be partakers of the divine nature made possible through the shed blood of Christ. By embracing the divine nature, we will be blessed to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. No longer will we be subject to the allurements of things that ultimately will separate us from the God of our salvation. We will be set free to live out the predestined will of God for our lives.

CONCLUSION

We have simply provided you with an introduction to our series. Jesus Christ, as we have shared, suffered the penalty for our sins so that we can be renewed and restored back into fellowship with God. Through Christ's sacrifice on our behalf, God calls us unto repentance on this merit. Repentance is a change of heart and mind that brings us closer to God. While repentance ends in us turning away from sin, turning from sin is not a condition for salvation. Turning to God certainly is required. It takes us turning to God through repentance that God's Holy Spirit will begin the work of turning us from sin as we yield ourselves over to God. Repentance is motivated by love for God and a sincere desire to obey His commandments. All God requires on our part is a sincere "Yes". Yes Lord, I will turn my life over to you to live in me. God will then begin the work of salvation in our life.

As we continue our series study, we will move on to the works of grace (*Justification, Sanctification, and Baptism in the Holy Ghost*) that must be active in the life of every born again believer. I encourage you my brother and my sister to dedicate to journeying with us as we gain a greater knowledge of our Lord and Savior.

God's peace and blessing be upon you....

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