

Making Your Calling and Election Sure

Finishing Strong

- We are disciples of Jesus; disciplined, consistent and faithful- **Mt. 28:19; 2Cor 9:25**
- Aliens and strangers in this world; not of this world- **1 Pet. 2:11; 2 Tim. 2:4; 1 Jn. 2:15-17**
- **Please Read: 2 Peter 1:1-15**
- vs 4-5 *“For this very reason...to escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires”*
- Faith+ Goodness+ Knowledge+ Self-Control+ Perseverance +Godliness + Kindness + Love
- It’s not how we start our Christian race, but it’s how we finish- **Ro. 2:7; 2 Tim. 4:6-8**

2 Peter 1:10 AMP, “Because of this, brethren, be all the more solicitous and eager to make sure (to ratify, to strengthen, to make steadfast) your calling and election; for if you do this, you will never stumble or fall.”

- Believing on Jesus, overcome all that the world throws at us to not believe- **1 Jn. 5:3-5**
- Finishing our race in Christ, strong till then end, makes us more than a conqueror
- We are never a failure until we give up- don’t ever quit, stop or make a peace treaty
- **Please Read: Hebrews 10:32-39**

1 Cor. 15:58, “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

Steadfast- is being firmly in one place, immovable- not subject to change. Firm in belief, determination or adherence to the truth.

- NKJV vs35: Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward
- ASV: Cast not away therefore your boldness, which hath great recompense of reward
- AMP: Do not, therefore, fling away your [fearless] confidence, for it has a glorious and great reward
- CJB: So don’t throw away that courage of yours, which carries with it such a great reward
- NIRV: So don’t throw away your bold faith. It will bring you rich rewards

- To Persevere means: to go through hard times and come out the other end
- Here is another word akin to perseverance – Steadfastness
- The secret to endurance is inspired by HOPE in our Lord Jesus- **Col. 1:27; 1 Th. 1:3**
- Wait for the fulfillment patiently- **Ro. 8:18-25**; Purify your life – **1 John 3:3**
- Encourage one another in regards to the goal- **1 Th. 4:18; 2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 3:13; 10:25**
- **Please Read: Hebrews 6:10-11**

The Unpardonable Sin

The Bible references two unpardonable sins that cannot be forgiven. The first one applies to the unbeliever who has never known Jesus and the other to Christians. This matter really has to be explained thoroughly lest the enemy take advantage of people.

Unbeliever

It was in reference to the Pharisees who attributed the work of Jesus of casting out devils to the power of Satan. In other words, they were accusing Jesus of being possessed with Satan. They had sinned against the Holy Spirit which is an eternal sin as Jesus pointed out.

- Unbeliever blaspheming the Holy Spirit- **Mt. 12:31-32; Mk. 3:28-29; Lk. 12:10**
- The Pharisees were highly educated religious leaders who knew Jesus was the Messiah
- Jesus' was a threat to them losing their job- **John 11:45-53**
- Jesus became the new High Priest over this New Covenant He was ushering in
- It was out of envy that they conspired to murder Jesus- **Mt. 27:15-26**
- They renounced their Messiah and betrayed Him- **John 19:13-22**
 - o Many were ignorant, but others were willfully rejecting their Messiah

Acts 3:13-15, "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this."

Christian

The second unpardonable sin is in reference to believers, only Christians can commit this sin, but only a certain kind of Christian who qualifies; fortunately the Scriptures are very clear.

- Once saved always saved is a Calvinistic concept based on extreme Sovereignty of God
- Creates a false sense of security that Christians can sin all they want; God's grace- **Jude 4**
- Yet why would Scripture place a warning on remaining true to the faith until the end
 - o **Ro. 11:22; 1 Cor. 15:2; Php. 2:12-13; Col. 1:22-23; Heb. 3:14; 2 Jn. 8; Rev. 2:26**

1 Tim 4:16, "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."

- The good news is for those who are sincerely following the Lord, God will keep them
 - o **1 Cor. 1:8-9; 1 Th. 5:23-24; 1 Tim. 1:5-6**

The Deceitfulness of sin

Jude 4, *“They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality”*

So for those who think they can use Grace as a license for sin, please consider the following:

- The pleasure of sin is for a short time, selfishness does not satisfy- **Hebrews 11:25**
 - o The diminishing return of ill-gotten pleasure, flesh never satisfies- **Eph. 4:19**
- God has the best; author of unimaginable pleasure, do it His way- **Ps. 16:11; 1 Tim. 6:17**
- When sin is full grown it gives birth to death- **James 1:13-15**
- Those who live to satisfy the bodily sinful nature will reap destruction- **Gal. 6:7-9**
- Walking after the dictates of the flesh = no peace or life- **Ro. 8:5-7**
 - o Does not please God, hostile to Him and you will die- **Ro. 8:8-14**
 - o Become an enemy of God when loving the world- **Jas. 4:1-10; 1 John 2:15-17**
- Practicing sin will shorten our lifespan- **Ps. 55:23; Pr. 10:27; 1 Cor. 10:1-13**
- Opens one’s life to demonic oppression; opens the door- **1 Cor. 10:14-22; Eph. 4:27**
- Shipwreck our faith and be turned over the devil- **1 Cor. 5:1-5; 1 Tim. 1:18-20**
- Cause us to backslide and turn away from God- **Lk 15:11-32; 1 Tim. 5:14-15; Rev. 3:16**
- Costs us the blessings of God, disqualified, forfeit- **Mk. 11: 25; 1Cor. 9:27; Heb. 12:16-17**
- Jonah 2:8, *“Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs.”*
- Bottom line, deliberate, habitually and willful sin just isn’t worth it!
 - o **Pr. 13:15**, *“Good understanding gains favor, But the way of the unfaithful is hard.”*

Hardens the heart

- Biggest danger for Christians habitually practicing sin; hardens our heart towards God
- Above all else we are told to guard our heart- **Ps. 24:4; 51:10; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:22**
 - o **Pr. 4:23**, *“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.”*
- We should never tolerate anything in our lives that draws us away from God- **Mk. 4:18**
- Practice of sin hardens, sears, desensitizes and makes our heart calloused- **1 Tim. 4:2**
- **Please Read: Hebrews 3:7-19** *Disobedience leads to a hard heart – miss out!*
- The deceitfulness of unrepentant sin is that it hardens our hearts over time- **2 Tim. 2:19**
- Normally when a Christian is in fellowship with God sins, heart condemned- **1Jn. 3:19-22**
- The remedy for a hard heart is godly repentance- **Jer. 23:29; 1 Jn 1:5-2:6; 2 Cor. 7:8-12**

Pr. 28:13, *“He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.”*

- **Please Read: Ezekiel 18:19-32; 33:12-20** *Not how we start, but how we finish our race*
- The fear of the Lord (Reverential Awe of God)
- **Job 28:28; Pr. 9:10; 10:27; 14:27; 15:33; 16:6; Isa. 11:2; 33:6; Acts 9:31; Heb. 12:28-29**
- Rev 2:26, *“To him who overcomes and does my will to the end...”*

Disowning

When a Christian sins, their fellowship (communion) is affected, but not their relationship- still a child of God. However, the real danger is when a Christian's heart becomes hardened by sin, they could get to a point where they reject and disown the Lord from their heart.

- Qualifications a Christian must meet to be in danger of unpardonable sin- **Heb. 6:4-12**
 - o *Once been enlightened*: sinner convicted by the Spirit- **John 16:8**
 - o *Who have tasted in the heavenly gift*: Jesus and New Birth- **John 4:10**
 - o *Who have shared in the Holy Spirit*: Baptized with the Holy Spirit- **Acts 1:8**
 - o *Who have tasted the goodness of the Word of God*: spiritually mature- **Heb. 5:14**
 - o *Who have tasted the powers of the coming age*: gifts of the Spirit- **1 Cor. 12:7-11**
- Christian must meet all 5 qualifications; this is not talking about baby Christians
- **Please Read: Hebrews 10:26-31; Galatians 1:8-9**
- **Please Read: Luke 12:8-9; 2 Tim. 2:8-13; Rev. 2:13**
- One reason there is no salvation for fallen angels, no excuse they should know better
- Humans were born into sin, ignorant and afforded a chance to repent and choose God
- What's the difference between Peter vs Judas betraying the Lord? Matter of the heart
 - o **Lk. 22:31-34, 54-62 vs Lk. 22:1-6; Mt.26:20; Jn. 13:21-30; Acts 1:25**
- Denouncing Jesus from the heart – these folks don't care nor are they sorry for it
- **Please Read: James 5:13-20; 1 John 5:16-17** 'Death' here is talking about eternal sin
- If a believer's heart is still tender to the things of God, they have not committed this sin

Church Discipline

- We see in Scripture before a Christian gets to the point of no return- dies prematurely
 - o The immoral brother in 1 Corinthians Chapter 5 – sure beats going to hell
 - o **1 Cor. 11: 17-34** – Christians not walking in love -judge themselves- repentance
- **Mt. 18:15-17; Acts 5:1-14; 1 Cor. 6; 1 Tim. 5:20**- Church discipline- rebuked publically

Seven Letters to the Churches

In Revelation 1:10-11 the Lord Jesus directed John to pass on seven letters to seven churches:

- **Ephesus (Rev. 2 :1-7)**: Forsaken first love for God and Gospel, call to repentance
- **Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11)**: Church suffering persecution; remain faithful even until death
- **Pergamum (Rev. 2:12-17)**: Tolerating idolatry and false teaching, call to repentance
- **Thyatira (Rev. 2:18-29)**: Tolerated false prophetess, idolatry, immorality- repentance
- **Sardis (Rev. 3:1-6)**: Church became lethargic, asleep, call to wake up and repent
- **Philadelphia (Rev. 3:7-13)**: Remained faithful during persecution, call to endure patiently
- **Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-22)**: Church became lukewarm & materialistic, call to repentance