

**THE PERMANENCE OF SALVATION IN JESUS CHIRST:
AN EXAMINATION OF THE JOHANNINE CORPUS**

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ABSTRACT

The question of whether a genuine believer in Christ can lose his salvation or not is an age-long one. This writer through this degree essay attempts to join this issue by looking at pertinent passages within the Johannine corpus. So an examination was done within the Johannine corpus on what it means to be saved by Christ, how Christ upholds the believer to the end of his Christian race in this world, and the consummation of salvation in Jesus Christ.

The writer also tried to bring out a clear understanding of repentance, faith, conversion and eternal life. This is to further help in answering the question of whether salvation is permanent in Jesus Christ or not.

The research that was carried out in writing this essay shows that the weight of evidence in the Johannine corpus is in favour of permanence of salvation in Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

Christ came into this world to save man from the curse of sin that came upon him when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden. Gray writes that curse means penalty. The penalty of, or curse of the law is death, which is eternal separation from God in hell. Christ had redeemed us from this penalty of the law and so anybody who has accepted him as personal Lord and Saviour is redeemed from death, that is, eternal separation from God in hell, but has passed into life, that is eternal life with God in heaven.¹ Gray commenting on Hebrews 10:14 further writes that,

Christ 'hath' redeemed us. The past tense is so important. It is not something Christ will do in the future, or is even doing at the present time, but something He has done. This man, by one sacrifice for sins hath perfected forever them that are sanctified...²

The blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins and that is why those sacrifices for sin must be continually repeated. Jesus came into the world and did that which the law cannot do. By his blood shed on the cross of Calvary, he made atonement for those that will come to believe in him. Therefore, if Christ cannot save to the uttermost those that believe in his name, his sacrifice of himself to atone for the sins of those who will come to believe in his name is as impotent and as useless as sacrifices under the law. (The impotence and uselessness is in regards to removal of sin).

But this is not the case. The word of God says,

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us (Hebs. 9:11-12, KJV).

¹James M. Gray, Salvation From Start to Finish (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1911), pp. 23-25.

²Gray, p. 25.

The redemption Christ obtained for those who will believe in him is eternal. What the law cannot do, the atoning death of Christ on the cross of Calvary has done. So Christ is able to save and uphold to the end those who put their trust in God through him.

And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession For them (Heb. 7:23-25, KJV).

All that is required for a person to be saved by Jesus Christ once and for all time is to believe and accept him as one's personal Lord and Saviour. The word of God says, "...if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jêsus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with mouth confession is made unto salvation (Rom. 10:9-10, KJV).

Most of the hymns in the Baptist Hymnal are highly theological. One of such hymns has to do with salvation, and it is appropriate to end this degree essay with it. First stanza of "I Surrender All," Hymn 363 goes thus:

All to Jesus I surrender, All to Him I freely
give; I will ever love and trust Him; in His
presence daily live.

I surrender all, I surrender all; All to Thee, my
blessed saviour, I surrender all.³

What does it mean to surrender all to Jesus as one's Saviour and Lord? The word of God says,

I BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the
mercies of God, that ye present your bodies
a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,
which is your reasonable service Rom. 12:1, KJV).

To surrender all to Jesus is to present one's body as living sacrifice unto God. Roberts when commenting on the above verse of scripture writes that, "An _

³Judson W. Van Deventer, "I Surrender All", Baptist Hymnal (Nashville: Convention Press, 1956), p. 363.

altar is usually thought of as a place where something dead is offered as a sacrifice."⁴ Therefore,

Paul said you are to offer yourself spiritually as a sacrifice. That means that give to God all of your life, including your dreams, thoughts, ambitions, desires, attitudes, and whatever motivates you to do the things you do. This giving, or sacrificing, to God becomes an act of worship. It is something you do daily.⁵

When a person is saved by Christ, the person is dead and his life is hid with Christ who is in God (Col. 3:3, KJV). Christ is the new source of life for such a person.⁶ This means that a believer must have surrendered the totality of his life unto Christ who saved him, and so in his Christian race in this world, Christ is the one who is in absolute control. Concerning the Christian journey in this world. Bow writes that the Christian is not the one holding God's hand, but God is the one holding his hand as He leads him through his Christian journey in this world.⁷

This means that, though a Christian may falter, God is always there to uphold him. Though, temptations may come his way, God will not allowed him to be tempted beyond that which he can bear, but He will even through such temptations provide a way of escape for him so that he may be able to bear them (I Cor. 10:13, cf. Jn. 16:33). However, it could be seen that the fact mentioned above is only applicable to those who have been regenerated; those

⁴David Roberts, "Handle with care", Youth in Discovery, 29, November – January 1998-99, p. 67.

⁵Roberts.

⁶Richard R. Melick, Jr. The New American Commentary, 32: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1971, p. 282.

⁷J. G. Bow, What Baptists Believe And Why They Believe It (Nashville: The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, n. d.), p. 20.

who will voluntarily love to obey God's command. Thus, if a person has been saved by Christ, he is eternally secured in him. Salvation in Jesus Christ is therefore permanent.