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Are Christians Saved or Being Saved?

(2013)

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Are Christians Saved or Being Saved?

INTRODUCTION: since there is some confusion amongst Christianity concerning the question: "Are Christians saved or are they in the process of being saved?" The focus of this study is upon all New Testament verses that use the word, being (especially in the context of salvation) to discover whether those who believe in Christ and trust in God's grace and faithfully follow the Lord are actually saved or in the process of being saved as some believe.

Acts 2

The Lord Added the Church those who were Being Saved.

The English Standard Bible says: -

Acts 2:47 -----⁴⁷ Praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were *being saved*.

The King James Bible says: -

- Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such *as should be saved* (Acts 2:47).

This verse is in the context of the Lord adding to those who are already in the church meaning the Lord is adding to those who are already saved. This means that it is the unsaved, who are hearing the Gospel with a right heart attitude and are in this sense in the process of being saved and added to the church. The ones being saved are those that are being added to those already saved it refers to those who are not saved, but should be saved. Being saved in this context does not apply to those who are already saved, but to those who are not saved but in the process of being saved (i.e., hearing the Gospel and being brought to repentance)

Romans 10:9

Salvation in Christ is Absolute.

The English Standard Bible says: -

Romans 10:9 -----⁹ because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you *will be saved*.

The King James Bible says: -

- That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou *shalt be saved* (Rom. 10:9).

In the Greek language and from Strong's Concordance shall and will carries the idea of completion and both words are always used in the positive present tense. Paul is saying that the moment a person believes in their heart and confesses with their mouth, they will be saved at that very moment. The expression, "Confess with the mouth" means that it is not kept secret.

This does not refer to a once of confession to accept Christ at an altar call, but carries the idea of not denying Christ when challenged, it means that we do not keep our faith secret or hid it from others. Genuine faith in Christ is so real a person is willing to speak about it everytime they have an opportunity and they are not ashamed to make it known to others that they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what it means to confess with the mouth. It means we do not keep our faith secret or hide it from others.

Us who are Being Saved.

The English Standard Bible says: -

1 Corinthians 1:18 ----- ¹⁸For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are *being saved* it is the power of God.

The King James Bible says: -

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which *are saved* it is the power of God (1 Cor. 1:18).

The King James Bible does not say being saved, but are saved, Strong's Concordance says the word (*are*) is only used when the meaning is emphatic (absolute) definite assured and decided. Since the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the message of the cross (the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ) saves to the uttermost whoever by faith believes in Christ it is clear that the King James Bible is the better translation.

1 Corinthians 15**You are Being Saved.**

The English Standard Bible says: -

1 Corinthians 15:2 ----- ²and by which you *are being saved*, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you— unless you believed in vain.

The King James Bible says: -

- By which also *ye are saved*, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain (1 Cor. 15:2).

The King James Bible does not say being saved, but ye are saved. The words "Unless you believed in vain," imply that if a brother or sister in Christ does not believe they are saved, and then their belief (i.e., their faith) is in vain. Biblical belief means having absolute assurance, confidence and trust in the person that one confesses to believe in. Righteousness that leads to eternal salvation is a pure and free gift of God given to those who put their trust and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for their righteousness and salvation there is no room for doubt in believing and trusting in the cleansing power of the blood of Christ.

Believe in or believe that: in the last four hundred years the word, believe has undergone a radical change of meaning, so that in modern meaning is very different from its pre-modern meanings. For most modern Christians believing means believing a set of claims, a set of statements such as: -

- Believing that God exists.
- Believing that the Bible is the word of God.
- Believing that Jesus is the Son of God born of the Virgin Mary.
- Believing that he died for our sins and that he rose from the dead.
- Believing that he is the only way to salvation.
- Believing that he will come again and so on and so forth.

This is what many modern Christians think believing means today. Many are taught that providing they believe and affirming a fixed set of beliefs (i.e., doctrines) to be true they are saved (these doctrines will vary depending on what church a person is in), but prior to about the year 1600s the word believe had a very different meaning in Christianity as well as popular usage.

It did not mean believing statements to be true, but rather the object of belief was always a person, not a statement. This is the difference between believing that and believing in. To believe in a person is quite different to believing a series of statements about that person. In pre-modern English believing meant believing in it carried the idea of a relationship of trust, loyalty, and love (i.e. to most to believe meant to belove). Up until about four centuries ago, believing in God and Jesus did not mean I believe that the following statements about God and Jesus are true rather to believe in God and Jesus had the following two primary meanings: -

1. To trust in God and to trust in Jesus in contrast to trusting in statements about God and Jesus for this would be believing that (true biblical faith is to trust in God as known in Jesus).
2. To commit one's allegiance, loyalty and love to God and Jesus.

This believing faith, fidelity, loyalty, allegiance and commitment to God as known in Jesus in contrast to believing statements about God and Jesus are very different, the first leads to an emphasis on believing right statements, the second leads to a transformed life.

NOTE: this does not mean that it is wrong to believe in statements about God, Jesus and the Bible, but believing in statements will not save a person rather the statements are to lead a person to Christ who is the only one who can save anyone to eternal life, it is trusting in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ that saves a person not trusting in statements about him.

2 Corinthians 2

Are Being Saved.

The English Standard Bible says: -

2 Corinthians 2:15 ----- ¹⁵For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who *are being saved* and among those who are perishing.

The King James Bible says: -

- For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them *that are saved*, and in them that perish (2 Cor. 2:15).

There are three groups of people in this verse: -

1. We (referring to those already saved).
2. Those who are being saved (referring to those who are being witnessed to by those already saved).
3. Those that are perishing (referring to those who want nothing to do with God).

Paul in this verse is saying that the apostles are a sweet savour of Christ, to those who are saved, and to those who are perishing, this is because the teachings of the apostles blesses those who are saved and saves to eternal life those who are lost.

2 Corinthians 4

Being Renewed, Day by Day.

The English Standard Bible says: -

2 Corinthians 4:16 ---- ¹⁶So we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature *is being renewed* day by day.

The King James Bible says: -

- For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man *is renewed* day by day (2 Cor. 4:16).

The context of this verse is not upon salvation to eternal life, but upon the inner nature being renewed day by day. Paul is saying that the inner nature of those who are in Christ and saved is being renewed while the outward body perishes, it is the inner nature of those in Christ and already saved that is being conformed and changed into the image of Christ.

Galatians 3

Are You Being Perfected by the Flesh.

The English Standard Bible says: -

Galatians 3:3 ----- ³Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now *being perfected* by the flesh?

The King James Bible says: -

- Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now *made perfect* by the flesh? (Galatians 3:3).

The Galatians begun in the Spirit means that they were saved by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and trusting in God's grace to be counted righteous, but are now being enticed back under the law, because of this Paul is asking them if they think they can be made perfect by being circumcised and doing religious works). This is because the Galatian brothers and sisters have been enticed by some of the Jews into believing they needed to be circumcised to be made righteous and accepted by God. This is the reason Paul is highlighting to the Galatian brothers and sisters that their salvation began by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and why he is asking them: "Why do they now think they can be made righteous, by circumcision and adhering to religious customs and traditions.

Faith in Christ is called the beginning of salvation, but not because the believer is only partly saved and has to after being saved work to earn the rest of their salvation. When a sinner humbles themselves before God in honest heartfelt repentance and by faith accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour they are delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred to the Kingdom of God's beloved Son (Colossians 1:13). This is the beginning of their salvation and the beginning of their new life in Christ. Providing they remain in the faith they will be saved to eternal life, but should they forsake their faith or stop trusting in Christ and God's grace for their righteous and beginning to trust in the works of the flesh (i.e., their own self-effort and adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions to make them righteous they have forsaken the faith they had at the beginning and the faith that saved them.

Saving faith is not a partial belief in Christ that leaves a believer having to increase his or her faith to make it 100% secure. No repentant sinner who humbles themselves before God in honest heartfelt repentance and accepts Christ by faith as their Lord and Saviour is 95% saved and then has to earn the other 5% to be fully saved. Saving faith is absolute. Jesus blood cleanses us completely it is all sufficient to save whoever comes to Christ. Every faithful brother and sister in Christ is completely saved and accepted by God through faith in Jesus Christ, but they have to remain faithful and continue in their faith in Christ until the Lord returns in glory.

Ephesians 2

Being Built Together into a Dwelling place for God

The English Standard Bible says: -

Ephesians 2:22 ----- ²²In him you also *are being built* together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit (from the English Standard Bible).

The King James Bible says: -

- In whom ye also *are builded* together for an habitation of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:22)

The context of this verse is not upon salvation, but upon Jews and Gentiles. There was hostility between the Jews and the Gentiles because of the law and Jewish ordinances. Jews at this time believed they were the chosen and holy race with God and the Gentiles were the unclean race without God, this is because Israel has always been God's special and unique people as the following verses show.

God said: -

- Israel was his son who he called out of Egypt and he loved them when they were a child (Hosea 11:1).
- He gave birth to Israel and carried them from the womb even to their old age. (Isaiah 46:3-4).
- Israel is his allotted heritage (Deut. 32:9) and the apple of his eye (Deut. 32:10).
- Israel is a people holy to him (Deut. 7:6) and his treasured possession (Deut. 14:2).

The LORD has not spoken this way with any other nation, but God has not only spoken of Israel differently, but always dealt with them differently to other nations.

- To Israel God gave the Ten Commandments and showed his great power.
- To Israel God declared his word, statutes and his rules.
- To Israel God gave the prophets, the worship and the promises.
- To Israel belonged the covenant, the adoption, the patriarchs and the glory.
- To Israel the oracles of God were entrusted.

Added to this the people of Israel are the offspring of Abraham the father of faith and from Israel's race came the Christ the Saviour of the world. The LORD has not given any other nations such great privileges, but Jesus Christ death and resurrection did away with the law and all the Jewish ordinances as a means to gaining favour with God. Jews and Gentiles who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are now saved in the same manner (i.e., by faith in Christ and God's grace). God by the Spirit is building Jews and Gentiles together into a dwelling place for God. This verse is not about salvation but about Jews and Gentiles unity in Christ. The context is upon Jews and Gentiles being united together into one body in Christ. This is because Jews and Gentiles are no longer two separate nations, but a new creation, a new creature and a new nation in Christ. The primary focus of this verse is the past separation of Jews and Gentiles and the present unity of both the Jews and Gentiles in Christ and not salvation.

Colossians 2:2

Being Knit Together in Love.

The English Standard Bible says: -

Colossians 2:2 ----- ²that their (all believers Jews and Gentiles) hearts may be encouraged, *being knit together* in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ,

The King James Bible also says, being knit together in love. The context of this verse is not salvation, but the unity of all believers (Jews and Gentiles) being joined together in love

Being Renewed in Knowledge

The English Standard Bible says: -

Colossians 3:10 ----- ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which *is being renewed* in knowledge after the image of its creator.

The King James Bible states this verse the same way. The focus of this verse is not salvation, but the renewal of the inner man by knowledge. This means that those who are saved are constantly being changed into the image of Christ by knowledge, by the love of God, by prayer, by reading and meditating on God's word and by fellowship, circumstances and experiences as they walk in faith with the Lord.

2 Thessalonians 2**Being gathered together**

The English Standard Bible says: -

2 Thess. 2:1 ----- ¹Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our *being gathered* together to him, we ask you, brothers,

The King James Bible says: -

- Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by *our gathering* together unto him (2 Thess. 2:1).

The context of this verse is not upon being saved, but upon that glorious and breathtaking moment when those who are already saved will be gathered together to be with the Lord at his return in everlasting glory.

1 Timothy 4**Being Trained in the Words of the Faith.**

The English Standard Bible says: -

1 Timothy 4:6 ----- ⁶If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, *being trained* in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed.

The King James Bible states this verse the same way. The context of this verse is not salvation, but growing in the faith and to spiritual maturity, all believers begin as spiritual infants in Christ, who spiritually grow as they walk in faith, read the Scriptures and fellowship with God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Titus 3**Being Justified by God's Grace.**

The English Standard Bible says: -

Titus 3:7 ----- ⁷so *being justified* by his grace we *might* become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

The King James Bible says: -

- That *being justified* by his grace, we *should* be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:7).

Both the English Standard Bible and the King James Bible say being justified, the context is not upon brothers and sisters in Christ being justified (in the sense of

having to be continually justified), but upon those who are already justified and already saved. Paul is telling brothers and sisters in Christ that because they have been justified by God's grace they might or should become heirs of eternal life. The reason Paul uses the words might and should rather than stating the inheritance in the absolute is no-doubt because no one can foretell if another brother or sister in Christ will remain or endure in their faith from the moment they are justified and saved to the time of their death or the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 10

Being Sanctified

The English Standard Bible says: -

Hebrews 10:14 ----- ¹⁴For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are *being sanctified*.

The King James Bible says: -

- For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that *are sanctified* (Heb. 10:14).

Sanctified can mean to make physically, morally or mentally blameless or to be ceremonially clean, it also carries the idea of being consecrated, meaning blessed, divine and devoted. From the time a sinner is born again and saved to eternal life to the time of their death or the return of Christ they are being transformed into the image of Christ in the inner man. It is in this sense the term, "We are being sanctified" is used. The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ did not partially redeem those who believe in Christ and then the remainder of their salvation is dependent upon adding to the redemptive power of Christ's blood, by self-effort or by some good works of their own or by strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days, and keeping religious customs and traditions to make the power of Christ's redemptive blood complete.

Christ's blood completely redeems all who trust in Christ for salvation, the cross of Christ leaves no doubt in the mind of those who put their trust in God's plan of salvation. Being sanctified is not in regards to salvation, but being made holy, as those who are saved walk in Christ. Those in Christ are already counted as righteous by God because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and as they faithfully walk in Christ they are inwardly and outwardly being made into the image of Christ, meaning they are increasing in the fruits of the Spirit (i.e., love, compassion, mercy, grace, kindness, forgiveness and such like things. The full and perfect majestic glory of this sanctification will not be complete or outwardly manifested until: -

- We are all changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; the last trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible and we will be changed because this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal body must put on immortality so when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:50-54).

Though God has sanctified every faithful brother and sister in Christ and counts them righteous because of their faith, devotion and love for His Son this sanctification and righteousness we now have by faith will not be complete or manifest until the Lord returns and we are all gathered together to be with him in eternal glory.

Righteousness is a Gift of God and comes by Faith.

The following verses show that righteousness and eternal life is a gift of God and comes by faith.

- Now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law (Rom. 3:21).
- We say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness (Rom. 4:9).

- If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:17) (See also Rom. 5:15-16) (Rom. 5:17).
- The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23).
- For by grace you have been saved through faith and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8).

These verses show that Abraham was counted righteous because of his faith and not because of any religious works. They shine a spotlight on the truth that righteousness that leads to eternal life comes through faith in Christ and has nothing to do with the law and that God grants eternal life to everyone who belongs to the family of Christ as a pure and free gift because of their faith in his Son and not because they have earned it by self-effort or by strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days or by legalistically keeping religious customs and traditions.

Jesus is, God's Gift of grace: the following words of Paul show the enormous importance of trusting in God's grace in Christ. Paul in his letters wrote: -

- I do not nullify the *GRACE* of God, for if justification were through the law (or any form of religious self-effort), then Christ died for no purpose (Gal. 2:21).

This means, when a brother or sister in Christ begin to justify themselves through the law and self-effort they nullify the grace of God and by their actions declare that Christ's death was of no value.

Equally as horrific as this Paul states: -

- When we forsake *GRACE* we separate ourselves from Christ because it was only by *GRACE* that God made us alive in Christ (Gal. 5:4) (Eph. 2:5).

Paul to highlight even more the majestic glory of grace wrote with absolute boldness that: -

- It is only by *GRACE* that any brother or sister has been saved (Eph. 2:8).

Paul in these verses is shining a brilliant floodlight on the truth that every brother and sister in Christ is saved, solely by faith and by grace and it is not their own doing, but the gift of God. This means that without grace no-one can be united to Christ and whoever is without Christ is separated from God and without God no-one can be saved to eternal life. This means in regards to eternal salvation, Christ, God, Grace and Faith, are all on an equal par with each other since no-one can be saved to eternal life without any one of them.

This is the reason the author in the book of Hebrews spends so many chapters brilliantly and skilfully explaining to the Hebrews that they must stop their sin of trusting in religious works, the Levitical Law and their priesthood to be counted righteous before God and start trusting in the grace of God that is in Christ and in his righteousness to be saved to eternal life.

By extension this means that Christians must stop trusting in attending a church building every week, strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions to be saved. Though the practise of some of these maybe good in themselves they become grossly sinful when believers trust in them for their salvation since not one of them has any power to save to eternal life.

SUMMARY: Being Saved.

The words being saved do not apply to those who have humbled themselves, repented and placed their trust and their lives in the Lord Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation, but rather to those who are hearing the Gospel and have a heart

that is open to hear it, these are the people the phrase being saved applies to. The King James Bible leaves no-doubt that eternal salvation in Christ is certain, guaranteed and absolute whereas certain verses of some modern Bibles appear to imply that those in Christ are being saved, but the Gospel of Christ does not proclaim that those who come to Lord in humble repentance and faithfully follow him are only 95% saved and will not be 100% saved until they by their own self-effort have achieved the other 5%.

This is not the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ rather salvation in the Lord is certain, guaranteed and absolute because it is not based on self-effort, but on grace.

The expression, being saved refers to the unsaved in the process of being saved and not to those who are already saved. Salvation in the King James Bible leaves no room for doubt in believing and trusting in the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. The translation of the King James Bible in regards to eternal salvation in Christ being absolute is in perfect harmony with the Gospel message of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If we ask ourselves the following two questions: -

1. What can I do by self-effort to pay-back the Almighty and Holy God who so loved me, that he gave his only Son, that if I believe in him I will not perish but have eternal life? (John 3:16).
2. What can I do by self-effort to pay-back Christ who after suffering a cruel, brutal and horrific death laid his life down so that I could be raised to eternal life?

It not only becomes very clear, but also very humbling that there is nothing we can do by self-effort that is able to put us in a position by which we can stand before God or before Christ and say, "I have paid the debt." God planned and purposed in His eternal mind before the foundations of the world that salvation would be by faith and grace was so that He could promise it with an oath. If our justification was not by faith and grace God could not promise salvation to us since not one of us can obtain to the perfect standard the law demands and the perfect standard of God's Holiness. Salvation in Christ is certain, the only way anyone is going to be rejected by Christ is for them to firstly deliberately and consciously reject him, all other things fall under the category of gaining some degree of reward or suffering some measure of loss but regardless of the loss those who are in Christ will nevertheless be saved to eternal life as stated in the following Scriptures: -

- No one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw each one's work will become manifest, for the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, they will receive a reward, but if anyone's work is burned up, they will suffer loss, though they will be saved, but only as through fire (1 Cor. 3:11-15).

In regards to eternal salvation the Bible presents the following three groups of people: -

1. We (referring to those already saved).
2. Those who are unsaved, but in the process of being saved (i.e., they are hearing the Gospel with a right heart attitude, but haven't yet responded).
3. Those who are perishing (i.e., the corrupt and those who want nothing to do with God).

End