

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, April 25, 2018 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

freedom
THE GRACE OF CHRIST IN GALATIANS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF GALATIANS Falling from Grace *Galatians 5:1-12*

REVIEW: Just for review and to get back into our study of the book of Galatians, let's briefly remind ourselves of some of the background material to the book. These are important background facts to keep in mind as we navigate this important and strategic book in the Bible.

4 Important Background Facts on the Book of Galatians:

(1) **Written by the Apostle Paul** – Paul wrote a large portion of the New Testament. This particular book/letter may have been his first letter. Also interesting to note is that some scholars believe that Paul have penned this letter himself, with his own hand (all of his other letters/writings were done through/with a personal amanuensis [scribe, secretary, recorder]).

(2) **Written as a circular letter** – Most of Paul's letter that we have in the New Testament were written to individual churches (i.e. Ephesians, Philippians) or to individuals (i.e. Timothy, Titus). This letter is different because it was written to a number of churches, and was meant to be passed/shared or "circulated" to each of these churches.

(3) **Written to churches in the region of Galatia** -Galatians is written to a number of different churches that Paul established during his first missionary journey in the region of Galatia in Asia Minor, which would be located in present day Turkey. This area was particularly important in the advance of the gospel and the New Testament church because it represented the movement of the good news/gospel further toward the west and to the rest of world, something Jesus had commanded from the very beginning of the New Testament church in Acts 1:8, "8 *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*"

(4) **Written to oppose and expose false teaching of the Judaizers** – After Paul had left the region of Galatia, following his first missionary journey and the establishment of these new churches, false teachers came in and began to expose these churches and new

believers/Christians to false teaching. These false teachers were known as “Judaizers” and they taught a “work-righteousness” system of salvation. Their teaching essentially said that in order to become a Christians you must first be circumcised and become a Jew, by obeying and following Jewish laws and customs. This was in direct contradiction to the good news/gospel Paul preached, which was salvation by grace, not by works.

We are now down to the last two chapter of the book and have perhaps come to the heart of the letter and maybe one of the more controversial passages in Paul’s letter to the Galatians. Let’s look at it in Galatians 5:1-12.

“¹Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. ²Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. ³And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. ⁴You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. ⁵For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. ⁶For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love. ⁷You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. ⁹A little leaven leavens the whole lump. ¹⁰I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is. ¹¹And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased. ¹²I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!” –Galatians 5:1-12 (NKJV)

CASE STUDIES ON FALLING FROM GRACE

CASE STUDY 1 - I know that there was a time in my life that I asked Jesus Christ to come in and be my Lord and Savior, and I really meant it, but I just don’t feel like I am saved anymore. I have drifted away from the faith, no doubt. I’ve done some bad things. I have really messed up and this time I feel like I have gone too far. I am afraid I have fallen from grace and that I need to be resaved.

CASE STUDY 2 - I don’t believe in all this “once saved, always saved” stuff that I hear some talk about. They say it’s impossible to fall from grace or lose your salvation no matter what you do. I mean, think about it... if that is the way salvation works I can get saved and then go out and live anyway I want to and do anything I want to do because I can’t lose it anyway. That is nothing by cheap grace.

CASE STUDY 3 - I look around and I see all these people who claim to be Christians but they live just like everybody else in the world and they do the same things as people that they say are lost... sometimes they do worse. I think something is wrong. They may have been Christians at one time, but their lives say something else. Maybe they have fallen from grace, and aren’t saved anymore.

Few subjects have created more disturbance and debate in the Body of Christ than the issue of the eternal security of the believer and whether or not a Christian can lose his or her salvation and fall from grace. Here is the question: *“Can a Christian fall from grace?”* Amplified, the larger question would be: *“Once a person has been born again into the family of God – received new life, a new nature, been justified and sealed by the Holy Spirit – can that individual ever fall from grace, thus becoming “unsaved” by sinning, or by ceasing to believe, or by any other cause?”*

JUST FOR YOUR INFORMATION – Just to give you an idea of how controversial and debated the subject of eternal security in among main-line Christian denominations try your hand at the following exercise. Please a check mark [✓] beside the Christian denominations that you think may possible teach or espouse the idea that a saved person (Christian) can fall from grace.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Methodist | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lutheran |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Catholic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Episcopal |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nazarene | <input type="checkbox"/> Southern Baptist |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Church of Christ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Holiness |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mennonite Brethren | <input type="checkbox"/> Evangelical Free |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assembly of God | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pentecostal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Presbyterian | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Free Will Baptist |

That is an indication of how controversial this subject is even among mainline Christian denominations and churches. It also reflects a need to understand the issue from a Biblical perspective. What does the Bible say on the subject of “falling from grace.” Not much actually. The phrase is used only once in Scripture, by the Apostle Paul in our letter that this study has been focusing on. **Galatians 5:4** is the only place in all of Scripture where the phrase “falling from grace is used.” Paul says in **Galatians 5:4**, *“⁴You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.”* While the Bible only uses the phrase “falling from grace” once in all of Scripture, the Bible does have much to say concerning the security of salvation, that is that salvation is forever and cannot be lost. We call this this doctrine of “Eternal Security.” It is interesting that whole denominations had built an entire doctrinal stance on the ideas that one can lose his or her salvation on one mention in Scripture and have omitted the bulk of Scripture that teaches that genuine salvation is eternal and cannot be lost.

This study will probe this controversial passage and phrase (“falling form grace”) which seems to be at the heart of Paul’s message to believers at Galatia, who were being confronted with the false teaching that a person is saved by what they do... works. But more that than it will also probe, for your serious consideration of the subject of eternal security of the believer and whether or not it is possible for a genuinely saved believer/Christian to fall from grace. As we think through the issue of falling from grace and eternal security, our desire is to let God speak to us from the Scripture.

I. A PLACE TO BEGIN IN THE DISCUSSION OF FALLING FROM GRACE VS. ETERNAL SECURITY

Certainly we need to ask ourselves, as we being this study, why is this subject so important and controversial... especially given its propensity for division and disagreement. Why study the Eternal Security of the Believer versus falling from grace if it only causes disagreement? Why is it important? Well a couple of reasons bear mentioning at the outset.

Important Reasons for This Study:

1. **Confusion** – 1 Corinthians 14:33 reminds us, *“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”* The church at worship before God should reflect His character and nature because He is a God of peace and harmony, order and clarity, not strife and confusion. This subject is very confusing to many people particularly in the area of their salvation. Can we know we are saved or not? Is it just a shot in the dark? If we can lose our salvation or fall from grace, how can we ever really know if we are truly saved? If we can’t lose it, does that cheapen it and allow us to live and act anyway we want because we can’t lose it. Many people don’t know if they are saved or not. Some wonder what you have to do or not do to slip out of salvation... fall. Some want to know if they have confessed enough sin to maybe get into Heaven. Some want to know if you can ever get resaved. Some wonder if they forget to confess one sin will they go to Hell. Some are stuck in sin and can’t seem to get out, so they wonder if they can even be saved. Some want to know what rules they have to follow to be saved or keep themselves saved.
2. **Assurance** – This study strikes right at the heart of the question of assurance. Many people lack assurance of their salvation and spend their entire life wondering if they are truly saved. 1 John 5:13 tells us that we can have assurance. In fact, this verse really tells us that God desires for us to have that assurance. Here is 1 John 5:13, *“These things have I written to you that believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.”* By taking a look at what Scripture actually teaches about the issue of the eternal security of the believer and whether or not it is possible to fall from grace, a firmer grasp of assurance may be gained, as a deeper understanding of salvation itself is grasped.
3. **Fear** – Another important reason to study falling from grace versus the eternal security of the believer is “fear.” The issue of not really knowing if I am saved or not, or if I’ve lost it (my salvation) ... if I have really done everything that I need to do... all of that can really strike a note of fear in a person who realizes that what we are really playing with here is our eternal destiny... Heaven or Hell. The fear of not knowing can be paralyzing, because we don’t if Hell might be in our future or not and we really can’t know without a proper understanding of this important doctrine.
4. **Right interpretation and grounding in Scripture** – Scripture itself commands us in 2 Timothy 2:15 to, *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing (correctly handling) the word of truth.”* To “be diligent” denotes zealous persistence in accomplishing a goal. And “rightly dividing” or “correctly handling” literally means “cutting it straight” – a reference to the exactness demanded by such trades as carpentry, masonry, and Paul’s trade of leather working and tentmaking. Precision and accuracy are required in biblical interpretation, beyond all other enterprises because the interpreter is handling Scripture in general, and God desires truth... that we rightly handle God’s Word... that we get to the heart of what it says and never use it, twist it, manipulate it, or pervert its truth in

misleading people. We must be grounded in the whole of Scripture to understand a teaching and doctrine like this one, eternal security, and whether or not it is possible for one to lose their salvation or fall from grace. It is absolutely imperative that we get at what Scripture, indeed is teaching about the subject.

II. THE DEFINITION OF ETERNAL SECURITY

In your own words, how would you define “eternal security?” Take a few moments and write your own definition of what you believe is meant by “eternal security.”

1. **Other Names for the Doctrine of “The Eternal Security of the Believer”** – The doctrine known as “The Eternal Security of the Believer” is also known by several different names. These other names may or may not rightly describe the doctrine, but they are none the less different titles that you may hear used to refer to the same thing.

4 Names for The Doctrine of Eternal Security:

- (1) **Perseverance or The Perseverance of the Saints** – This is the terminology used by famous theologian and reformer, John Calvin and his later followers. This term is used in regard to “final perseverance” of the saints. It means that believers, “can neither totally or finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end and be eternally saved.” All this according to the Westminster Confession. This doctrinal terminology for eternal security, “The Perseverance of the Saints” make us one of the petals in the tulip of Calvinism.

TULIP of 5 Point Calvinism

Total Depravity - Sin has affected all parts of man. The heart, emotions, will, mind, and body are all affected by sin. We are completely sinful.

Unconditional Election - God does not base His election on anything He sees in the individual. He chooses the elect according to the kind intention of His will (Eph. 1:4-8; Rom. 9:11) without any consideration of merit within the individual.

Limited Atonement - Jesus died only for the elect. Though Jesus’ sacrifice was sufficient for all, it was not efficacious for all. Jesus only bore the sins of the elect.

Irresistible Grace - When God calls his elect into salvation, they cannot resist.

Perseverance of the Saints - You cannot lose your salvation. Because the Father has elected, the Son has redeemed, and the Holy Spirit has applied salvation, those thus saved are eternally secure.

- (2) **Security of the Believer** – This is the shortened term most often used by proponents of the doctrine today.

- (3) **Assurance of Salvation** – Sometimes the doctrine of eternal security is referred to as “Assurance of Salvation.” This term or phrase is actually not a good description of the doctrine, but is very different. We will look at the difference briefly in this study.
- (4) **Once Saved, Always Saved** - While this is a somewhat accurate description of the doctrine of eternal security it is an oversimplification of the doctrine, and it is the terminology or phrase most commonly used by who do not hold to the doctrine... those who would say that Scripture teaches otherwise. Another phrase that is sometimes used along with “once saved, always saved” is “cheap grace” meaning that the emphasis on the doctrine of eternal security is upon being saved by grace alone plus nothing else cheapens grace and indicates that one could do whatever he or she wants and live as they please because they are recipients of grace.
2. **A Good Definition of Eternal Security** – A good, concise definition of the eternal security of the believer is:

“Eternal Security is the work of God that guarantees that the gift of salvation, once received, is forever and cannot be lost.”

3 Important Parts to the Definition:

- (1) **“the work of God” – John 3:16**
 - (2) **“the gift of salvation” – Ephesians 2:8-9**
 - (3) **“salvation... is forever and cannot be lost” – Romans 6:23**
3. **Clearing Up A Difference** – At this point it is important for us to clear up a misunderstanding that is often brought up in any discussion on the doctrine of eternal security and that is the difference between eternal security and assurance of salvation. There is a big difference between the two as already stated.

The Basic Difference Between Eternal Security and Assurance of Salvation:

- (1) **Eternal Security is a doctrine based on the interpretation of Scriptural teaching on the subject of salvation.**
- (2) **Assurance of salvation is mental, emotional, and psychological precept or concept that is experienced as a realization that one possesses usually as one grows and matures in the faith through proper teaching and grounding in the word of God.**
- (3) **Eternal Security is based more on knowledge and interpretation**
- (4) **Assurance is based, to large extent, on feeling and emotion.**
- (5) **Both often bring unnecessary, but terrible trauma to a person’s life.**

5 Reasons People Often Lack Assurance:

- (1) **Some doubt the reality of their commitment to Christ** – No evidence/commitment in their life and it causes them to doubt
- (2) **Some question the correctness of the procedure they went through** – Can’t pin point a specific time, didn’t follow the right procedure, don’t think they did it right the first time

- (3) **Those who don't believe in eternal security will naturally lack assurance** – May be always wondering if they are still saved or if they need to do it again
- (4) **Sin** – Sin in a believers life will always lead to doubt if it remains unconfessed
- (5) **A lost condition** – For that one who is having doubts or lack of assurance of their salvation they should check it out and be sure they are saved because some who doubt have reason to... they are indeed lost

III. THE DEBATE OF ETERNAL SECURITY VS FALLING FROM GRACE

Throughout the years, the doctrine of the eternal security of the believer has been a hotly debated issue in the church with some insisting that it is possible for one who is saved to fall from grace. Many theologians teach that it is possible to lose ones salvation, others claim that salvation is secure and cannot be lost once obtained. Just to give us a taste of some of the what the controversy may be over and to take a look at how difficult the issue is to tackle I want to take you to three controversial passages that seemingly teach the other side of the issue. These three passages will actually be addressed later in the study, but for now just let them solidify for you the complexity of this doctrinal study.

3 Difficult Passages for the Eternal Security Debate:

1. **Hebrews 6:1-6**
2. **Hebrews 10:26-27**
3. **Galatians 5:1-12 (v.4)**

IV. PAUL'S DISCUSSION OF FALLING FROM GRACE VS. ETERNAL SECURITY (Galatians 5:1-12)

So we come to Paul's words, in his letter to the Galatians, where we know he is dealing with a group of false teachers (Judaizers) who had come into these churches and begun to promote and teach the false idea that a person is saved by works, or by obeying the law, by what they do... a works-righteousness salvation. Remember Galatians is written to expose and dispute these false teachers' claims (their false teaching). Paul's words in our passage in Galatians 5:1-12 are really a continuation of that argument, and right in the middle of his words is this rather controversial and often misinterpreted passage in Galatians 5:4. How are to take Paul's words about "falling from grace?" Let's begin by just laying some ground work in rightly or correctly interpreting Scripture.

Some Things to Remember When Interpreting a Passage:

1. **Always interpret a passage within its context** – A verse or passage of Scripture must be interpreted in context... both immediate and broader context. (*Ex. Galatians 5:4 seems to be saying that it is possible to "fall from grace", but what does it say when it is read in the context of verses 1-6 and in the broader context of the book of Galatians?)*
2. **Always interpret a passage with an understanding of its background** – Historical background, literary understanding (type of literature... remember Scripture is filled with historical narratives, poetry, letters, prophetic and apocalyptic literature, etc.), grammatical background and understanding (remember Scripture was originally written in three languages; Hebrews, Greek and Aramaic, also grammatical issues, sentence structure, etc. are important in getting at a correct interpretation). (*Ex. Galatians 5:4 seems to be saying that it is possible to "fall from grace," but understanding the type of*

literature that the book of Galatians, the historical background about what was going on and what Paul was dealing with, and looking at grammatical issues in the passage may reveal something quite different)

3. **Always read the passage in light of what the rest of Scripture says** – Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture. No text of Scripture (properly interpreted in its context) will contradict another text of Scripture. When contradictions seem to exist, it is the task of the interpreter to explain the seeming contradiction. He must never seek to do so by ignoring or denying any part of the truth that is revealed in Scripture. (*Ex. Galatians 5:4 may indicate that it is possible to “fall from grace” but Jude 24 says He (Jesus) is about to “keep you from falling”... an apparent contradiction that can only be cleared up through careful interpretation of the whole of Scripture... remember Scripture does not contradict itself*)
4. **Remember that there is really only one proper interpretation of Scripture, and that is God’s** – The Apostle Paul told us, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that, **“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...”** (2 Timothy 3:16). The word translated in that verse as “*inspiration*” means “*God-breathed.*” So literally the Greek translates this way, “*All Scripture is breathed out by God...*” In other words it comes from Him, therefore, you cannot hope to arrive at a correct understanding of Scripture independent of God, through the person of the Holy Spirit. The illumination of Scripture can only come from the Spirit of God. **1 Corinthians 2:12-13 says, “We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. That is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.”** Because the author of Scripture – God the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21, “*For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*”) – resides within the child of God (1 Corinthians 3:16, “*Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you.*”), he or she is in a position to receive God’s illumination (1 Corinthians 2:10-11, “*... God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.*”). And, indeed, the Spirit of truth not only provides insight that permeate the mind, but also provides illumination that can penetrate the heart. This is why when we go to trying to understand and correctly interpret Scripture we must ask for the Holy Spirit to teach us, show us, guide us, direct us, guard us, in understanding the truth. We are not the final say on His Word, God is!
5. **Use available tools and resources** – This may be the most simplistic yet practical help in interpreting a passage. Use good tools are resources that are readily available to a student of Scripture. Good and reliable Bible Concordances, Bible Dictionaries, Biblical Commentaries, Biblical language helps, varying reliable translations, etc. are extremely helpful in getting at a right interpretation of Scripture. A word of caution here... be sure that you are using a “good” and “reliable” source. There are many Bible helps out there that are not theologically and doctrinally sound. Also remember that, there are just man made tools and should not be substituted for Scripture itself. They are helps! Scripture should still be interpreted using the above mentioned criteria.

NOTE: With these basic rules for interpretation and ideas (helps) for understanding Scripture, let's look at what these three controversial passages are saying concerning "falling from grace" or "losing one's salvation."

A Closer Examination Galatians 5:1-6 and Falling from Grace:

The focus seems to be on verse 4 where Paul says, *"You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace."* The question is, "Who is falling from grace or fallen away from grace in this passage?" Let's examine the question in light of three of the above mentioned principles of interpretation applied to the our passage in Galatians 5, especially verse 4.

3 Principles of Interpretation in Understanding Galatians 5:4:

1. **Contextually** - This is a context issue. Galatians 5:4 seems to be saying that is possible to "fall from grace", but what does it say when it is read in the context of verses 1-6 and in the broader context of the book of Galatians? Is the issue "falling from grace" or is the issue how a person is "justified" or "saved." The context of the passage and the book give us a better understanding of what is being addressed in verse 4. *The book Galatians is about being justified or saved by faith through grace as opposed to attempting to being justified or saved by works or what we do...* work of religions (keeping the law), works of morality (being a good person), etc.
2. **Historically** – Historically remember that Galatians was a circular letter written to churches in the region of Asia Minor known as Galatia. Again, it would be in the area of present day Turkey. Paul had helped to establish these churches probably in his first missionary journey. After his departure, false prophets and teachers known as Judaizers had come into these areas and begun to spread their false teaching, mainly that a person was saved by particular works (the law) and not just by grace. The works they emphasized were Jewish works. In other words they taught that in order to become a Christian, you must first become a Jew and obey Jewish laws, rites and custom. You must be "circumcised" and begin to obey all Jewish laws. It was the Judaizers and Galatians who were following them that were falling further and further away from God grace and thus, salvation. So, *historically the passage is not even talking about believers, but rather unbelievers and how they are trying to get to God. Their methods were leading them further away from Him, rather than to Him.*
3. **Grammatically/Linguistically** - Grammatical issues in the passage help us to better understand who is being addressed and what is being said and by implication what is not being said. Just notice Paul's word grammatically and linguistically in verse 4. Paul says, *"You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace."*

2 Words:

- (1) **"estranged"** - The Greek word translated as *"estranged"* in my Bible (you may have the word "alienated" NIV, or "cut off" NLT, or "no effect" KJV, or "severed" NASB or ESV). That word translated as "estranged" means *"to be separated,"* or *"to be severed"* literally. Here it is, *"the path of man's*

achievement as a mode of trying to get to God whatever that may be, whether good works, law keeping, being good enough, religions, rituals, is completely severed, cut off, separated from, estranged from God's mode of getting to Him, which is Christ and His achievement on the cross on our behalf." It's not what we do, it's what Christ has done.

- (2) **"fallen"** - The Greek word translated in verse 4 as **"fallen"** means **"to lose one's grasp on something."** Those who are trying to be justified by works or the law have lost their grasp on grace. Paul's clear meaning is that any attempt to be justified by the law is to reject salvation by grace alone through faith alone. Those once exposed to the gracious truth of the gospel, who turn their backs on Christ (Hebrews 6:4-6) and seek to be justified by the law are separated from Christ and lose all prospect of God's gracious salvation. Their desertion of Christ and the gospel only proves that their faith was never genuine.

2 Pronouns: Notice the change of pronouns between verse 2-4 and verse 5-6.

- (1) **"you"** – Paul uses the pronoun "you" in **verses 2-4, "2 Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. 3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. 4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace."** Paul clearly does not include himself in this group he is referring to as "you" who attempt to be justified (or saved, made right with God) by law or good works. He is addressing the unbelieving Galatians who were buying into the Judaizers works-righteousness method of salvation... namely circumcision. That's who is being severed from God's method of salvation and falling farther and farther away from grace... God mode of salvation through what Christ has done for them.
- (2) **"we"** – Notice that in verses 5-6 the pronoun changes from "you" to "we." Paul now includes himself in this group in contrast, **"5 For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love."** Paul includes himself, as a believer, among those who are being saved, justified by faith.

Some important keys to understanding Galatians 5:4:

- (1) **This verse is actually dealing unbelievers** – Those it is speaking of as "falling from grace" are actually not believers at all, but those who are trying to be justified or saved by what they do and have never actually experienced genuine salvation
- (2) **This verse is not dealing with the subject of eternal security but rather how a person is saved** – Any discussion of eternal security would only apply to a genuinely saved person. This verse is actually talking about a person who has not been saved, but rather is trying to be justified (saved) by what he or she does, the law, good works, religion, etc.
- (3) **This passage is not teaching that a believer can lose his or her salvation** – Again the passage is not about a genuinely saved person/believer. The person in the passage is not saved, and you can't lose what you don't have.

- (4) **This passage is teaching that a lost person who is trying to be saved by works is moving farther and farther away from saving grace** – The tragic understanding of this passage is that a person that is trying to be saved or justified before God by what they do, by good works, by being a good religious person, by observing rules and regulation, the law is actually moving further and further away from the very thing they seek... God's grace.

V. SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

“The doctrine that claims a person can lose his salvation (fall from grace) makes salvation conditional. It says that since God has saved us, we will maintain our salvation as we continue to match up with God’s standard. But if we fail at any point we lose it.” – Dr. John MacArthur

What do you think of this quote? What do you think MacArthur is saying? Do you agree? Disagree? Why?