

Can Our Salvation Be Lost? Part 3 – Were they Saved?

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Sermon File Type | Sermon |
| Passages | 1 Corinthians 5:1–5 |
| Topics | Genuine Salvation |
| Tags | Hypocrisy, False Teachers, Sinners is the Church |
| Date | 09/22/2019 |

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH

Sermon: Can Our Salvation Be Lost? Part 3

Topic: Were they Saved

Scripture Text: 1 Corinthians 5:1–5 (NKJV)

09/22/2019

1 Corinthians 5:1–5 (NKJV) 1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father’s wife! 2 And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

I have often heard it said when a person who was supposed to be a Christian was found to be a major sinner or wrong doer. The explanation often given was, “well he/she was not a Christian in the first place.” I have always been uncomfortable with that response because we do not have absolute perfect judgment regarding the salvation of another.

I want to briefly cover 4 examples of people that I believe relate to our series. We will investigate and see if their actions were enough to cause them to lose their salvation?

There are several possible case studies related to this topic including:

1. Ananias and Sapphira Acts 5:1- 11
2. Simon the sorcerer Acts 8:9–24
3. Demas who forsook Paul in the Ministry Colossians 4:14, Philemon 24, 2 Timothy 4:10
4. Mark who forsook Paul in the Ministry Acts 15:37–38
5. Those that worked wonders in the name of Jesus Matthew 7:21–23
6. Man sleeping with his father’s wife 1 Corinthians 5:1–5
7. Hymenaeus and Alexander 1 Timothy 1:18–20
8. Antichrist in the church 1 John 2:19

I have selected four cases to test this supposition.

Case 1- Ananias, with Sapphira

Acts 5:1–5 (NKJV) 1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. 2 And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the

apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? 4 While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." 5 Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things.

This event could support a message series in itself, but in this series, we are focusing on whether one's salvation could be lost and if they were saved in the first place.

There is a word commonly used in connection with Ananias and Sapphira, "hypocrisy."

Hypocrisy - a pretending to be what one is not or to believe what one does not: behavior that contradicts what one claims to believe or feel

Without getting too deep into the story there are a few key points mentioned in the scriptures that will give us a clue as to whether or not Ananias and Sapphira were saved in the first place.

1. They were among the first members of the first church as implied by the scriptures.

Church membership does not validate one's Christian salvation. (remember the parable of the wheat and the tares). Some commentators believe that they believed and were filled with the Holy Spirit because they were mentioned right behind Barnabas.

The phrase which we render lying to the Holy Ghost, *pseusasthai se to pneuma to hagion*, some read, to belie the Holy Ghost, which may be taken two ways: [1.] That he belied the Holy Ghost in himself; so, Dr. Lightfoot takes it, and supposes that Ananias was not an ordinary believer, but a minister, and one that had received the gift of the Holy Ghost with the hundred and twenty (for mention is made of him immediately after Barnabas); yet¹

I don't support this view.

Lying to the Holy Spirit.

Acts 5:3 (NKJV) 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?"

Many Christians lie quite frequently. If this in itself was disqualifying many of us would be lost again.

Their lie was associated with the current working of the Holy Spirit within the church but it was supported by their act of hypocrisy.

"Satan filled your heart"

I believe that a true believer whose heart is filled with the Holy Spirit has no room for Satan to come in. A Christian can be tempted by Satan, as Jesus was, (*Luke 4:1-2*) but the heart of the Christian is encouraged to be filled by the Holy Spirit. (*Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 6:3.*)

Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, As our song today says, "come Holy Spirit we need you to fill our hearts again.*

Others were moved by the Holy Spirit to share among those who were in need

¹ Henry, M. (1994). [*Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*](#) (p. 2081). Peabody: Hendrickson.

Acts 2:44–45 (NKJV) ⁴⁴ *Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.*

Ananias and Sapphira pretended to be moved by the same spirit thereby discounting the work of the Holy Spirit. They were faking their spirituality to impress others to be seen by men. (Matt 6:1-6)

Matthew 6:2 (NKJV) ² *Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.*

Let's not forget that the Holy Spirit is mentioned and very active during this event. For them to imply, through a lie that they were also moved by the Holy Spirit was in fact blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

Mark 3:29 (NKJV) *29 but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation”—*

My Conclusion: I question as to whether Ananias and Sapphira were Christians in the first place but hypocritical members.

Case 2 - DEMAS (*Philemon 23–24, Colossians 4:14, 2 Timothy 4:9–10*)

The next person we will look at is Demas. Demas was mentioned by Paul to be one of his “fellow laborers.”

Philemon 23–24 (NKJV) *23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, 24 as do **Mark**, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow laborers.*

Colossians 4:14 (NKJV) *14 Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you.*

Both Philemon and Colossians were written by the same author at about the same time (ca. a.d. 60–62) while Paul was a prisoner in Rome (4:3, 10, 18; Philem. 9, 10, 13, 23);²

Demas' salvation may be questioned by some because he proved to be unfaithful by deserting the ministry with Paul because he loved this “present world.”

2 Timothy 4:9–10 (NKJV) *9 Be diligent to come to me quickly; 10 for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.*

Paul wrote 2 Timothy after Philemon and Colossians, shortly before his martyrdom (ca. a.d. 67)³

Demas is accused of:

1. Loving this present world more than his ministry.
2. Trying to serve two masters.
3. Making a wrong decision.

Is there any evidence that Demas was saved or was he a hypocrite also? I believe he was truly saved. I believe so because he spent too much time in the presence of Paul who I believe, the hypocrisy would have been revealed to him through the “spiritual gift of discernment.”

² MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). [The MacArthur Study Bible](#) (electronic ed., p. 1830). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

³ MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). [The MacArthur Study Bible](#) (electronic ed., p. 1873). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

Does his unfaithfulness and desertion attest to his lack of salvation? I think not. Anyone who has been in the ministry for a long period of time struggles with doubt. That's Satan's first dart he shoots at us. Doubt can be followed by depression and deception deluding us into believing that there is something better. Just study the temptation of Jesus and the temptation of Eve.

The ministry was not easy. Having to walk everywhere, often in fear of their lives by bandits and wild animals and even religious Jews. They lacked creature comforts depending on the hospitality of others. Often the results were depressing. (*see 2 Corinthians 11:22–27 for more*)

That is why we are to consistently put on the full armor of God.

Ephesians 6:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

The accusations against him may be true but Paul does not question his salvation and neither do I. He lost a place in one of the greatest ministries in Christianity. He probably lost some of the rewards laid up for him, but I cannot say with absolute surety that he lost his salvation.

What Demas did was not unlike what John Mark did.

Acts 13:13 (NKJV) ¹³ *Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John, (Mark) departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.*

Acts 15:37–38 (NKJV) ³⁷ *Now Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark. 38 But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work.*

Perhaps Mark was influenced by the departure of Demas. They all being mentioned together in *Philemon 23–24*. Paul was against Mark continuing with them but he never questioned Mark's salvation.

Barnabas (son of encouragement) continued the ministry taking John Mark with him.

James 5:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ *Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.*

The result was that Mark's confidence and faithfulness was restored as was his relationship with Paul.

2 Timothy 4:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. 11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.*

- This is the same John Mark that became one of the four Gospel writers.
- We must be careful not to judge too quickly the salvation of another.

We have finally come to our focus passage.

Case 3 – Open Immorality in the Church

Our passage deals with an open sin within the church at Corinth. It deals with a man that was engaged in sexual immorality with his father's wife, his stepmother. The sin was so grievous and well known that even the pagans (non-believers) took notice.

Incest was punishable by death in the OT (Lev. 18:7, 8, 29; cf. Deut. 22:30) and was both uncommon (“not even named”) and illegal under Roman law.⁴ JM

Paul, not being there physically but in spirit (v3) has already pronounced judgment on the case.

1 Corinthians 5:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, **deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh**, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

Such open and blatant sin within the church would surly cause some to wonder if this man was saved in the first place.

Paul’s judgment was to turn this man over to Satan and not associate with him

⁵ ***deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh,***

1 Corinthians 5:11 (NKJV) *11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person.*

that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus

God hands some people over to Satan for judgment, such as King Saul (1 Sam. 16:12–16; 28:4–20), Judas (John 13:27), and the sinning member in the Corinthian church (see notes on 1 Cor. 5:1–5). 5

The man’s sin did not take away his salvation but put him under the punishment of Satan

In some instances, God has turned believers over to Satan for positive purposes, such as revealing the genuineness of saving faith, keeping them humble and dependent on Him, enabling them to strengthen others, or offering God praise⁶

This does not imply the loss of salvation but more to the chastising of a believer to bring them to repentance.

2 Timothy 2:25–26 (NKJV) *25 in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, 26 and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.*

In summary: You cannot lose your salvation because of sin. To free us from sins power is why Christ died. Our sins of the past, the present and the future. This does not mean that we will not suffer consequences for our sins but our salvation is secure in Christ.

END

Message Scriptures: **1 Corinthians 5:1–5**, *Acts 5:1–5*, *Acts 5:3*, *Luke 4:1–2*, *Acts 2:4*; *4:8*, *31*; *6:3*, *Ephesians 5:18*, *Acts 2:44–45*, *Matt 6:1–6*, *Matthew 6:2*, *Philemon 23–24*, *Colossians 4:14*, *2 Timothy 4:9–10*, *2 Corinthians 11:22–27*, *Acts 13:13*, *James 5:19–20*, *2 Timothy 4:10–11*, *1 Corinthians 5:4–5*, *1 Corinthians 5:11*, *2 Timothy 2:25–26*.

⁴ MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). [The MacArthur Study Bible](#) (electronic ed., p. 1735). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

⁵ MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). [The MacArthur Study Bible](#) (electronic ed., p. 1862). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

⁶ MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). [The MacArthur Study Bible](#) (electronic ed., p. 1862). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

Col. Sanders Found the Secret

In his autobiography, Col. Harland Sanders of Kentucky Fried Chicken fame says that he was always a God-fearing man. In every venture he gave God a tenth of the profits. Yet he knew that if he died, God probably wouldn't take him to heaven.

Worried, he traveled to Australia to a special church convention for the answer. He didn't find it.

One day, Sanders was walking down a street in Louisville, Kentucky, when Rev. Waymon Rodgers of Louisville's Evangel Tabernacle invited him to some evangelistic services. Several days later, Sanders went. At age 79, he claimed the promises of Rom. 10:9. "When I walked out of that church that night, I knew I was a different man. All my tithing and good deeds had never given me the sense of God's presence that I knew then," he says.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

In support of Eternal Security Doctrine

<https://jdgrear.com/blog/2-ways-to-know-you-are-saved/>

Eternal security - is it biblical

<https://www.gotquestions.org/eternal-security.html>

<https://billygraham.org/decision-magazine/april-2008/secure-forever/>

Five Truths About Eternal Security

<https://www.desiringgod.org/labs/five-truths-about-eternal-security>

Piper: "No one will be finally saved who does not continue in the faith."

<https://www.allaboutgod.com/once-saved-always-saved.htm>

<https://www.crosswalk.com/blogs/joe-mckeeever/7-questions-about-once-saved-always-saved.html>

<https://www.compellingtruth.org/once-saved-always-saved.html>

<https://www.ligonier.org/blog/can-christian-lose-their-salvation/>

"Whoever comes to me I will never cast out."

<https://str.typepad.com/weblog/2010/07/whoever-comes-to-me-i-will-never-cast-out.html>

Jesus Promised, "Him That Cometh to Me I Will In No Wise Cast Out" (even continuing sinners!)

By David J. Stewart | December 2013

http://www.jesusisprecious.org/articles/in_no_wise_cast_out.htm

In support of losing Salvation

<https://activechristianity.org/can-a-christian-lose-salvation>

<https://www.bible-knowledge.com/lose-your-salvation/>

<http://www.comereason.org/bible-verses-on-salvation.asp>