

God Is Government

Isaiah 33:22

“For the LORD is our judge, the
LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD
is our king; he will save us.”



THE SOVEREIGNTY OF MANKIND

PART SIXTEEN

We discussed in Past Fifteen about our Eternal Security in God’s Sovereignty. We will look at the opposing side of that question – Apostates. However, that does not mean there is no opportunity for apostasy within our Eternal Security – for walking away from the Lord. Judas followed Jesus for three years, but then he turned around and betrayed him. Jesus calls him the “son of perdition,” and it is easy to make the case that Judas was never saved in the first place. He was always going to be the man who betrayed Jesus, and Jesus knew it from the beginning.



Jesus told a parable of ten virgins in Matthew 25:1-13. Five were wise and brought extra oil, and five were foolish and did not. We all need to be ready and waiting for Christ (The Doctrine of Imminency). As long as we are ready and waiting, we do not have to fear that we will miss Him.

We find plenty of warnings against false teachers and false prophets in the New Testament. We meet people in our lives who know how to say all the right things, but their hearts are actually far from God. We can all think of certain preachers and televangelists who have gotten rich on the Gospel. Peter warns us against these people.

“1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. 3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.”

- 2 Peter 2:1-3

We also find mention of people – church – going people – who apparently do not really understand the Spirit and heart of God. They look good on the outside, but they do not receive the truth in their hearts. Paul

warns Timothy about those kinds of Christians, who say they serve God but actually do not follow Him after all:

“3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

- 2 Timothy 4:3-4

We are able to find plenty of churches like this today. The people in them go to weekly services, but they attend sermons where they hear what they want to hear. They are not hungry for the actual truth of God, and their lives look nothing like Jesus Christ when they leave the church doors.

However, Jesus also tells us about another group of people, the short-lived believers. There are some people who hear the Word and are excited about the Gospel, but their faith dies because their roots never get deep (sanctification). The seed (justification – redemption) of the Word grows for a time, but then the young plant dies. Remember Christ’s parable of the scattered seed in Matthew 13, Mark 4, and Luke 8? The seed fell on the hard road, on the rocks, among the thorns, and into the good soil. Only in good soil did the seed grow to bear fruit:

“13 They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. 14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.”

- Luke 8:13-14

Does that mean there is no hope for the rocky soil or the thorny soil? No, we can pray for the stony and thorny hearts. We can pray for ourselves, “Lord, please show me what it takes to get these rocks out of my heart.” The rocky, thorny soil can be cleared. However, there is a place to say that some people can hear the Gospel with joy, but then they turn away and forget about it and go on with their lives. Were they ever truly saved? Not from the perspective of eternity, God knows who His are, because He see things from outside of time. In fact, Devine Election God chose His people before the foundation of the world.

It comes down to the difference between good faith, true inner heart belief, and a temporary good idea. We can walk down the sawdust trail at a Billy Graham crusade, and that might be the moment of true faith and trust in Christ, or it might be the moment where we expressed what we thought was a good idea at the time. One leads to salvation, and the other does not.

The thief on the cross in Luke 23 believed in Jesus, and that is all it took. Jesus told him they would see each other in Paradise. That thief expressed true faith. Hanging on the cross in his last moment after a life of sin, his sins were forgiven. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy, He has saved us.” Yet, how many people who want salvation actually want to follow Jesus Christ?

There are places in the Bible that describe people who have served God but then end up falling away. Consider Demas, Paul’s fellow servant in the Gospel. We hear about him in a couple of epistles before we learn that he has gone back into the world. In Colossians 4:14, Paul sends the greetings of Luke “the beloved physician” along with the greeting of Demas. In Philemon, we also find Demas listed as Paul’s fellow laborer. At the end of his life, however, Paul tells Timothy that Demas has abandoned him.

“For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.”

- 2 Timothy 4:10

This is tragic sort of verse; Paul tells Timothy that everybody has left him. It says nothing of Demas’ salvation. Demas might have had business to attend to that Paul just did not understand. We do not know the struggle of Demas here. Still, it is a sobering verse. Did Demas lose his salvation, or did Demas just disappoint his friend?

Then we have this terrifying passage in Hebrews, a passage that gives us all a sense of dread:

“4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to

come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”

- Hebrews 6:4-6

This is probably one of the most frightening passages in all the Bible. The writer of Hebrews makes us all think of those things we have done those sins we have committed, those time we told God, “I am doing it my way for a while.” Have we crucified the Son of God afresh and put Him to open shame again? Are we guilty of that, and can we ever be forgiven?

When we are fearful in this way, we have to remember Peter. Thank you, Father, for Peter. Peter had followed Jesus for three years. He had seen Jesus do great works day-after-day. He knew the power of his Lord, and he had vowed to go to death for Christ. Yet, that very night Peter was questioned by a little servant girl, and he denied Jesus three times. Peter the big fisherman, the leader of the disciples, Peter denied Jesus.

Did Jesus throw Peter away? No, of course not. Did Jesus love Peter? Absolutely. Did Peter belong to Christ. Yes.

The passage in Hebrews 6 is not about God’s refusal to accept somebody who has repented. It is about somebody who has willfully walked away from God and refuses to repent. The Bible constantly tells us that salvation is a free gift, that it is not by works but by faith that we are saved. Yet, the Bible constantly tells us to obey God and listen to Him and seek Him. God works in us – and we work out our salvation with fear and trembling:

“12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

- Philippians 2:12-13

