

Captive's Corner



"Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"

2 Corinthians 10:5

Emmaus Bible Correspondence School Set Free Ministries of Missouri and Illinois P.O. Box 22006 St. Louis Missouri 63126 - 0006

WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO TURN BACK ?

This originally was a response written to a student who asked "what about people who used to be Christians - but they've turned back to the old lifestyle - are they still going to heaven?" while making reference to Luke 9:62.

To begin, let me simply say that once a person is a possessor of His life, that person is always a possessor of His life. It is impossible to think of a true believer as no longer possessing that life. Eternal life is a

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relationship with God as Father through Jesus Christ. John 17:3 When a person repents and accepts Jesus as their personal Savior and Lord, God makes that person a true child of God. See John 1:11-13 and Galations 4:6-7. Again, all is by grace. Now it is possible for a person

to participate in the blessings of the new age of the Spirit by associating with a community of believers and yet never make a personal commitment to Christ. Rather, such a person eventually chooses to turn away from Him as though his salvation must be found in another. For such a person, there is no hope, for there

is no other Name given under heaven whereby a person can be saved. See Hebrews 6:4-8;10:26-31 with Acts 4:12. Such a person has never been changed within; all was simply external to him. Like those teachers who knew of the truth yet did not love the

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truth in order to be saved, such a person is like a sow that has been washed returning to wallow in the mud or a dog returning to his vomit. Their actions simply reveal their true character from the start. See 2 Peter 2 with 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12. Now, the demands of discipleship do not make a disciple but prove the reality of the confession. If a man says he will

follow Christ yet turns back from Him when the going gets tough, then the test proves the absence of true faith. Such was the case with those in John 6:60-71. Some forsook Him early; one betrayed Him later. Yet, the ones who stayed with Him because their faith was

real said, "Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Now, obviously, such faith would not always express itself in a manner that could be

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known to men, but God knew and still knows all that are His. See Luke 22:31-34 and 2 Timothy 2:19. He, alone, knows the wheat from the tares. See Matthew 13:24-30. Those who are true will be known; those who are false will be

judged as such. No man can fool God. The true, of course, will give glory to God, for they will be with Him forever not due to their own merits but due to His great work for and in them. See Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 4; Titus 3:3-8; Revelation 5:9-10; etc.

Yes, when we know Him as He is and for all He has done, is doing, and yet will do for His people, we worship Him and follow Him out of love, not fear. As another student

wrote to me earlier this week, "We need not fear Someone Who loves us so perfectly." Yet, on the other hand, we are to have a healthy fear of Him, that is a respect for His Person and authority in our lives that acknowledges that someday we must all give an account to Him of what we do in these bodies. See Romans 14:9-12 and 1 Peter

"For now, the true and the false must grow together, but in the conclusion of this age all will be made manifest. No man can fool God."

1:17. I say that this is a healthy fear because such an attitude is found in all godly men throughout the ages. See Abraham (Gen. 22:12) and our Lord Himself (Isaiah 11:1-5). It is a courageous fear because it

motivates a man toward righteousness in a world that is so full of evil. It is a productive fear because it motivates a man to listen to and obey the Word of God. When we truly love someone, we desire to do that which is pleasing to him. If that someone is our Father, we know that we must ultimately give an account to Him for all we do.

Sincerely in Christ,

Set Free Instructor,
Set Free Ministries of Missouri and Illinois