

the wicked”(2 Pet. 3:17). Surely it is clear that remaining in God’s favor (grace) is conditioned on continued obedience to Him. Either these spoken of could fall and be lost or Heaven will have some who have left faithfulness and embraced the error of the wicked. God knew that man would attempt to tamper with His will, so he left us clear statements to disprove these human theories. Read 1 Tim. 4:1-2 and Gal. 5:4.

John 10:28-29 reads, “And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.” Some will raise the question; “doesn’t this prove that one cannot fall?” The forces of error will use many passages to try and lull people into security. What is said in John 10:28-29 is absolutely true; no man, no force, not even Satan himself, can forcibly remove a child of God from God’s care. No one who hears the voice of the Lord and follows Him is going to fall. And no power can remove such from God’s hand. But in the points we have already made God’s Word speaks of those who make a decision to refuse to hear, refuse to follow, and willfully persist in entering into a sinful way. No one snatched them from the Lord’s hand: they willfully departed.

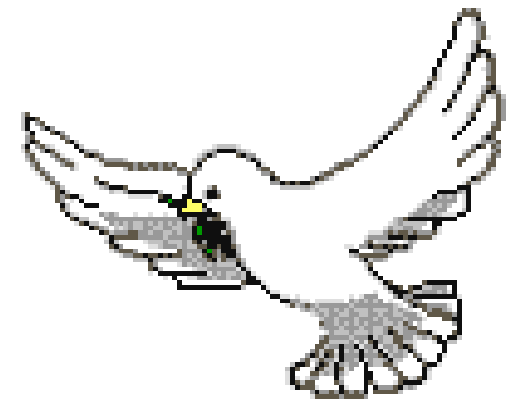
There is not doubt that one who abides by the conditions of God is enjoying God’s grace, and will be saved eternally. Conversely one who decides to not continue in God’s Word will fall from grace (favor) and be eternally lost. Remember Peter’s admonition: “If you continue to do these things.”

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Can You Fall From Grace

By Jack Critchfield



“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God”

Eph 2:8

Most of our friends in the religious community want to tell us that when God decides to bestow His grace upon us, we have no choice in the matter. And once a man has entered into God's favor (been saved), his continuing to receive God's grace is not conditional at all upon man's teaching, actions or will. Article 9 of the Methodist Discipline states, "Justification by faith alone is a most wholesome doctrine and full of comfort." I can see where "faith alone" would be a very comforting idea, can't you? If that were true, you wouldn't have to worry about anything you might do. In fact, it would leave you the option of doing anything you might desire. Things such as cheating, lying, committing sexual immorality (and all that it implies) or even murder might be engaged in without fear of any repercussions from God.

It seems somewhat strange that people believe this, in that we have so much evidence in the Bible, of God placing conditions on mankind. In Gen. 2:16-17 God told Adam, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat..." Is this not a command from God that Adam and Eve were required to keep? Because of the fact that they transgressed that command (sinned), Adam (and Eve)

were driven out of the garden and man was separated from God.

We see conditions placed on man's continued salvation all the way through the Bible. Most of the time the little word "if" is the signal of some conditions. In 2 Peter 1:10, Peter says, "for if you do these things, you shall never fall." In this verse never falling is conditioned by the word "if". In Acts 8:13 Simon obeyed the gospel (called gospel of God's grace in Acts 20:24). Yet after entering into a saved state he fell into sin as to be (1) doomed to perish, (2) having a heart not right with God, (3) needing to repent, (4) being guilty of wickedness, (5) poisoned by bitterness and (6) bound by iniquity. Some will tell us that he was not really saved, but the scriptures do not support such statements. Here is a man who entered into the grace of God then turned to his own will and committed sin, refusing to abide by the conditions of the Lord and thus falling from grace. Either that, or with all of the things mentioned here against him, he still goes to heaven. But in Revelation 21:24 we read, "But there shall by no means enter it (heaven, jlc) anything that defiles, or causes a abomination or a lie...." That means sin cannot enter heaven.

Also, in Heb. 6:4-6 we read, "For it is impossible for those who were once

enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. The writer here is speaking to those who need to go beyond the first principles of Christ (Heb. 5:12-14). It could not be the alien sinner since the sinner needs to obey the first principles not go beyond them. The writer is speaking to those (1) once enlightened, (2) who have tasted the heavenly gift, (3) partook of the Holy Spirit and (4) tasted the good word of God. Not one of these can apply to the alien sinner because the alien sinner has not tasted nor partaken of any of these and certainly not been enlightened, as the Bible throughout speaks of his state as "darkness". Instead this is describing the child of God who has not borne the proper fruits, with the warning he can fall away.

Peter addressed his second letter to those who have already obtained faith of the same value (just as strong) as the apostles (2 Pet. 1:1). Would I be wrong in assuming that they were saved? After saying that they can pursue the course that will cause them to never fall (2 Pet. 2:10), he then points out that they can be "led away with the error of