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THE SURE WORD By Jonnie Hutchison

CAN A CHRISTIAN FALL FROM GRACE?

Those who believe that a Christian cannot fall from God's grace and be lost must ignore several noticeably clear Bible passages. Paul warned the Christians in the church at Galatia, "You have become **estranged from Christ**, you who attempt to be justified by law; **you have fallen from grace**" (Galatians 5:4). The law in this context is the Law of Moses which was no longer in effect having fulfilled its purpose and replaced by the law of Christ (See Colossians 2:13-17; Hebrews 10:9-10; Galatians 6:2). The point is that if the Christians in Galatia attempted to be justified before God by following a spiritual law that was no longer in effect, they would be both "estranged from Christ" and would "have fallen from grace." Why would this warning against falling from grace be given to Christians if it were impossible for a Christian to fall from grace?

The book of Hebrews was written to Christians who were Jews who were in danger of leaving Christ and returning to the practice of Judaism. Note the description and warning given in Hebrews 6:4-6, "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." Is there any better description of one in a saved condition than verses 4 and 5? Yet, in verse six it is obvious that those described in the previous two verses could "fall away" and thereby put themselves in the position of "crucifying the Son of God again" obviously placing their souls in eternal jeopardy.

Jesus taught that those who "believe and are baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). When Philip preached the gospel to the Samaritans, a sorcerer named Simon believed and was baptized (Acts 8:13). Yet, Simon attempted to purchase the power of the apostles to impart the gifts of the Holy Spirit. His spiritual condition at that point is described as his heart was not right in the sight of God. He was "poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity." Was Simon, a Christian, saved or lost at this point? He was lost and needed to repent of his wickedness and pray for God to forgive him (Acts 8:18-24).

Yes, a Christian can fall from grace so as to be lost. But God makes provision for the erring Christian to come home (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:6-9). Do you need to come home? greenplainsc@comcast.net.