

North Christian Church -

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11/19/15 - The Gospel, Salvation, & Sanctification - Part

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"the proof"

from dokimion - means test, act of testing; derives from an assayer's terminology (testing metals for purity); the "proof of your faith" is meant to edify the true Christian by putting said faith to the test "by fire".

The Proof of Your Faith

Faith must be put to the test in order to consummate it (ala 1Pe 1:7). Faithfulness is fruit of faith, but never a substitute for it. Even an unbeliever can be faithful in a religious context (Mt 7:21-23).

The Proof of Your Faith

For believers, salvation (deliverance) is a function of faith, not faithfulness. "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb 11:1).

The Proof of Your Faith

Those who lack faith are not given a sense of assurance, but rather are shown that their so-called "faith" was, at best, faith in their own faithfulness (eg: human good).

To the Confused Sinner:

If you think that the "act" of faithfulness (called out as fruit of faith in the Bible) is the basis of your justification, you are deceived. That is your flesh trying to stake a claim to some sort of a "work" of your own.

The Force of the Gospel

We know dogmatically God's will, "who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." (1Ti 2:4). God does everything possible to save man; however, He won't ever breach man's free will.

God Saves

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1Ti 1:15). Jesus Christ is

God. God saves us by grace. "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Paul's Reality

To Paul, the Gospel was a reality, not a past experience (Ro 1:16-17).

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown on 1Ti 1:19

made shipwreck-"with respect to THE faith." Faith is the vessel in which they had professedly embarked, of which "good conscience" is the anchor. The ancient Church often used this image, comparing the course of faith to navigation. The Greek does not imply that one having once had faith makes shipwreck of it, but that they who put away good conscience "make shipwreck with respect to THE faith."

Grace Realities

Salvation and sanctification are simultaneously awarded as "realities". In other words, if a person is saved, they are sanctified (positionally) and guaranteed sanctification (experientially). To God, these are simultaneous realities.

Baker's Evangelical Dictionary

Apostasy: Defection from the faith, an act of unpardonable rebellion against God and his truth. The sin of apostasy results in the abandonment of Christian doctrine and conduct. With respect to the covenant relationship established through prior profession of faith...apostates place themselves under the curse and wrath of God as covenant breakers, having entered into a state of final and irrevocable condemnation.

Apostasy

Apostasy has to do with defection from "the faith", not from saving faith. Only an unbeliever can defect from Christianity (aka "the faith"). True believers cannot, lest they make Jesus a liar, "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one" (John 18:9).

Apostasy

Apostates, since they fail to be sanctified experientially, cannot possess true faith positionally. A person can never lose their salvation, but if they apostatize, it's really evidence of never being saved.

The Sin Unto Death vs. Apostasy

God will kill a believer (His final form of grace is the "sin unto death") before He stops pouring grace upon their laps; however, God will "give over" an apostate to abide in sin (eg: Ro 1:24, 26, 28; Heb 6:4-6).

2Co 11:4

For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.

Apostasy

Apostates had a profession of faith at one time but not the possession of faith.

Their mouths spoke something other than what their hearts believed. Apostasy is not loss of salvation but evidence of past pretension. In this basic sense, it is reserved for unbelievers only.

Discipleship (generic)

A person can be a "disciple" of anyone. For example, a student can learn from someone, gain knowledge, and not believe it. They may be members of a church, even. Judas was described as a disciple and he apostatized.

1Ti 4:1

But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith [apostatize], paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,

"many of his disciples withdrew"

those who were learning from Him, but never truly believed, apostatized. While they were known to others as "disciples", they were not believers. (Jn 6:47, 64)

The Arch-Apostate

Judas was chosen by Jesus, labeled with "the twelve", a known disciple and apostle. Yet all the labels meant nothing because he was an unbeliever all along, hence his apostatizing.