**Victory Everlasting Gospel Church**

**April 15th, 2017**

**Once Saved Always Saved, Fact or Fiction?**

**Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.** (Matthew 7:21)

**That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.** (John 3:6-7) Let Us Pray

All scriptures are found in the King James Bible. I will also be quoting from the Spirit of prophecy ( Ellen G. White ) and from an old sermon from Present Truth.org.

Once saved, always saved was the question, until these two scriptures were read. Here we have preachers in the church preaching the wrong message. We have right now young folks being taught this wrong message. We have older folks who have been in the church for a long time and they carry this wrong belief to their graves. Why do you think we keep saying, study your scripture and spirit of prophecy. Do not believe what you here until you have checked it out yourself.

Down the road at the intersection, there had always been a stop sign. Everyone had to stop at it before crossing the road. That sign had been there as long as anyone could remember. But, while some people said the old signpost was necessary to protect the people, others thought it was useless. "We would do just as well without it," they said, "probably better." In fact, many people began ignoring the signpost and as they did, some noticed that the accident rate increased at that intersection. When it was suggested that disobeying the sign might be the problem, some people became very irritated.

Before long, the whole thing blossomed into a full-fledged controversy. There were those who said the sign should be obeyed, while others said it should be done away with. A campaign even began, to get enough people in favor of tearing it down.

But there were still many who were puzzled at the whole situation, and hardly knew what to think. Some said all the fault was with the sign. "It is a nuisance," they declared, "get rid of the sign, and then everything will be all right again." But there were a few thoughtful ones who maintained that the problem was not the sign—but disobedience to it. That was what was causing the trouble. And trouble there was.

About this time, some learned men, who had been trained in the sciences, stepped forward and tried to settle the matter once and for all. They declared, "We have completed a research study. The difficulty at the intersection is not the traffic, but the sign. It is just too hard to obey. Take down the sign and the problem will be solved." Astounded, a few stood up and protested. "It is the sign which is saving lives, not disobedience to it."

Then two or three university philosophers announced their own profound findings: The trouble lay deeper than most realized. "The problem," said they, "is not the sign itself—but the rules that such signs stand for. If we just do away with the rules, everyone will live more peaceably and be happier." Surely this must be true, thought many, since it comes from the wisest men in the land.

Not willing to be left out, the leading churchmen picked up on the idea, and amplified on it in several deep theological articles. When the preachers read those learned words, fearing to be thought of as old-fashioned, they immediately began preaching the good news from their pulpits. They called it "The Good News of Freedom from Law."

Under their influence, large numbers were gradually being won over to the idea. "It is true that God gave us the Ten Commandments," they said, "and those rules provide mankind with the best moral code it has ever had, but He did away with those rules at the cross. We are saved by grace now. We can just keep sinning till the end of time."(Sounds like once saved, always saved) But there were some who said, "God did not do away with the Ten Commandments at the cross, He did away with the ceremonial laws at the cross." And on it went.

Well, with messages like this— and coming from even the preachers—many of the people thought the atheists and liberals surely must be right after all. "Down with rules," they said, "for they will only hurt us. Freedom to do as we like— that is what we want!" The more people talked about it, the more people liked the idea. Even the politicians, always anxious to please, climbed onto the bandwagon.

The whole thing became a scoffer’s holiday. "Let us get rid of the regulations requiring obedience. Did not the preachers tell us that even God no longer has rules governing anyone’s conduct? Why should we obey man’s rules either?"Well, it surely looked as if peace and harmony was nearing. At last, the people felt they had solved the problem of the intersection. Tear down the sign, and then everyone will be happier when they go through that busy intersection.

Because of the atheists, preachers, and liberals, by this time large numbers of people were totally ignoring the old signpost anyway. Indeed, not only was the sign disobeyed, but the new teaching brought an end to other restraints as well. Drunken drivers, reckless speeders, and corrupt policemen who could be bribed. Everyone did as he wanted. Ambulances regularly hauled away the injured and dismembered to the hospital.

But this fact only increased the controversy, as a small number kept urging that people obey the law. While some said it was disobedience to the sign which caused the accidents, others theorized the accidents were caused because people were distracted by the words on the sign as they raced through the intersection. "Can’t you see," they cried, "it is those rules which cause all the problem?"

But there were still a few who doggedly replied, "The very existence of the busy intersection requires traffic rules and warning signs! If the people will just obey the signs, the accidents will cease!" By this time, those who hated that old wooden marker and the rules behind it had become so angry that they said the problem was not really just signs and rules, it was the people urging that the signs and rules be obeyed! So a meeting was held, and the leading men of the town led out.

"All our troubles," they said, "are caused because the rules still exist, and because of those who tell us to obey them!" Then they passed a resolution, condemning the small company who urged that the laws be obeyed. They were denounced as legalists and troublemakers. "If we can just get rid of the laws and the troublemakers who demand their obedience, we can have peace and prosperity again," they cried. Everyone took sides, as one side pled for law and order and the other demanded freedom from restraint.

A small group declared, "We want to do what is right. Self-control and obedience to law is the only way to really be happy." But the larger number cried, "We want to do whatever we please. Freedom from all the rules is the most satisfying way to live!"

My friend, on which side do you stand? The one leads into a broad road, along which is found pain, sorrow, suffering, and eternal loss. The other opens onto a narrow pathway which leads steadily upward to great reward.

In the beginning, God placed mankind under moral law—the Ten Commandments. Men and women have always been required to control themselves in order to have true happiness in this life. But God also offers grace—enabling strength through Jesus Christ—to obey those laws. By their actions, everyone inevitably moves to one side or the other in this controversy.

[The Bible](http://www.allaboutgod.com/once-saved-always-saved.htm) teaches “once saved, always saved” -- that we can be saved once and for all only through a repentant, [saving](http://www.allaboutgod.com/once-saved-always-saved.htm) faith in Jesus Christ.

***Look away from self to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. It is a sin to doubt. The least unbelief, if cherished in the heart, involves the soul in guilt, and brings great darkness and discouragement. . . . “Some seem to feel that they must be on probation and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed before they can claim His blessing. But these dear souls may claim the blessing of God even now. They must have His grace, the spirit of Christ to help their infirmities, or they cannot form Christian characters. Jesus loves to have us come to Him just as we are--sinful, helpless, dependent. We claim to be children of the light, not of the night nor of darkness; what right have we to be unbelieving?–****Review and Herald, April 22, 1884 (3SM 150.1).*

Some people thank God for the empowering help, offered through the life, death, and mediation of Jesus Christ, and are willing to take hold of that strength. Thankful that God offers to redeem them, they submit to His plan and, in His strength, they control themselves and spend their years trying to help others live happier lives. They are getting ready for heaven, for they have heaven in their hearts. But there are others who want to live as they please. They care little for God’s laws or for man’s. All that matters is how they can advance their own selfish interests and pleasures.

2nd Peter 2: 20-21 **says, for if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.**

**For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known [it], to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.**

***“You are not to look to the future, thinking that at some distant day you are to be made holy; it is now that you are to be sanctified through the truth. . . . We are to receive the Holy Ghost. We have had an idea that this gift of God was not for such as we are, that the gift of the Holy Spirit was too sacred, too holy for us; but the Holy Spirit is the Comforter that Christ promised to his disciples . . . . Then let us cease to look to ourselves, but look to him from whom all virtue comes. No one can make himself better, but we are to come to Jesus as we are, earnestly desiring to be cleansed from every spot and stain of sin, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. We are not to doubt his mercy, and say, ‘I do not know whether I shall be saved or not. ’By living faith we must lay hold of his promise, for he has said, ‘Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool’*** (ST, April 4, 1892, par. 3).

***“It is God that circumcises the heart. The whole work is the Lord's from the beginning to the end. The perishing sinner may say: ‘I am a lost sinner; but Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He says, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Mark 2:17). I am a sinner, and He died upon Calvary's cross to save me. I need not remain a moment longer unsaved. He died and rose again for my justification, and He will save me now. I accept the forgiveness He has promised’"*** (1SM 392.1).

If you hunger for something better for your life, then plead with God for forgiveness. Confess your sins to Him and forsake them. Acts 3:19 **“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out…” (Fact)** Repentance includes sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. Dedicate your life to Him, give Him everything you are. He alone can lift you up and give you a new life.

There are the youth pastors who instruct the young people that it isn’t necessary to stop sinning. **(Fiction)** "God doesn’t ask for it," they say, "all you need is faith and you will be saved." **(Fiction)** Then there are the ministers who instruct the people that they are saved at the cross, and cannot now be lost as long as they "only believe. **(Fiction)**

There are also the church leaders who extol the virtues of "only believe" and warn the flock to beware of trying to obey God’s law, lest they become legalists. It is true that the law cannot save us, but on the other hand we cannot be saved by breaking it. Wasn’t it Jesus who said in John 14:15 **"If ye love me, keep my commandments." (Fact)**

“Those who accept the Saviour, however sincere their conversion, should never be taught to say or to feel that they are saved. This is misleading. Everyone should be taught to cherish hope and faith; but even when we give ourselves to Christ and know that He accepts us, we are not beyond the reach of temptation. God's word declares**, ‘Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried.’** Dan. 12:10. **Only he who endures the trial will receive the crown of life.** (James 1:12.)” (COL 155.1)

**"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Fact)** Matthew 7:21

Once saved, always saved. That is the cry so often heard from many of the pulpits today. "I can do whatever I want, as long as I have accepted Jesus as my personal Saviour. Why I could go out and mow down a crowd of people with a machine gun and if I were to die at that very moment, I would be saved." Many people believe this teaching today, but again, is it true? Once we have accepted Jesus, can we do whatever we want and still be saved. Most people who believe this teaching will quote the following Bible verse as proof: **"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."** ( Romans 8:38, 39 )

Now this is a wonderful Bible promise that God has given us and it should inspire us all. But does it say once a person is born again, it is impossible for him to lose his way and be lost? In fact, is this verse talking about salvation or eternal life at all? No, this verse is clearly talking about God's unconditional love towards man, not unconditional salvation. Salvation is conditional! **(Fact)** You might also notice that the word "sin" was not included in the list of things which are unable to separate us from the love of God.

If we continue in sin, after we have asked Jesus to be our personal Saviour, are we really in a saved relationship**? "For if we sin willfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth** **no more sacrifice for sins."** ( Hebrews 10: 26 ) ***We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. So long as Satan reigns, we shall have self to subdue, besetting sins to overcome; so long as life shall last, there will be no stopping place, no point which we can reach and say, I have fully attained. Sanctification is the result of lifelong obedience****.* {AA 560.3}

***“We are never to rest in a satisfied condition, and cease to make advancement, saying, ‘I am saved.’ When this idea is entertained, the motives for watchfulness, for prayers, for earnest endeavor to press onward to higher attainments, cease to exist. No sanctified tongue will be found uttering these words till Christ shall come, and we enter in through the gates into the city of God. Then, with the utmost propriety, we may give glory to God and to the Lamb for eternal deliverance. As long as man is full of weakness--for of himself he cannot save his soul--he should never dare to say, ‘I am saved’*** (1SM 314.2).

Promises Conditions

(1) John 6:37 **Come to Christ**

(2) John 10:14-15, 27-28 **Know Christ**

(3) John 15:1-8 **Abide in Christ**

(4) John 3:16-21 **Believe, come to the light, live the truth**

(5) 1 John 1:9 **Confess our sins**

(6) 1 John 5:10-13 **Believe, be “in Christ”**

(7) 2 Pet 1:5-11 **Sanctification as evidence of salvation**

*(8) Heb 10:14* ***“Perfected forever”on condition that we continue in the relationship with Christ through which we are “being sanctified”***

Don’t teach new converts to say, “*I am saved”* (COL 155) —with the connotation of being “beyond the reach of temptation,” and beyond the possibility of falling. Don’t say “I am saved” (1SM 314) —***addressed to antinomians who claimed “once saved, always saved.” regardless. No one is ultimately secure until inside the “city of God”*** (1SM 314) —in other words, losing faith and being lost is still possible.

Warnings about possibility of falling.

(1) Ezekiel 18: 21-24 **A righteous person who turns away from righteousness will be punished with the wicked**

(2) Matt 18:21-35 **Forgiveness can be forfeited**

(3) 1 Cor 9:27 **Even a minister can fall away and be lost**

(4) 1 Cor 10: 1-5, 12 **Israelites, though “baptized,” fell away. “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”**

5Gal 3:1-3; 5:4 “**You have fallen from grace.”**

(6) Heb 3:12-14 **Beware of apostasy through unbelief**

(7) Heb 6:4-8 **Apostasy crucifies Christ again )**

(8) Heb 10:26-29, 36-38 **Continuing in known sin tramples the Son of God underfoot; profanes the blood of the covenant, and insults the Spirit of grace**

(9) 2 Peter 2:20-22 **Better not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from it**

(10) Jude 5 **Once “saved,” but later “destroyed”**

(11)Rev 2:4-5, 25; 3:2-3, **Churches threatened with “removal” if they don’t repent 11, 15-16 and change; those who endure to the end will be saved**

Sanctification is not the **work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a** **lifetime.** It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ. **(Fact)** Wrongs cannot be righted nor reformations wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict, that we shall overcome. **(Fact)**

Christ is the source of every right impulse. He is the only one that can implant in the heart enmity against sin. Every desire for truth and purity, every conviction of our own sinfulness, is an evidence that His Spirit is moving upon our hearts. “Jesus has said**, ‘I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.’** John 12:32

***“We shall fail often in our efforts to copy the divine pattern. We shall often have to bow down to weep at the feet of Jesus, because of our shortcomings and mistakes; but we are not to be discouraged; we are topray more fervently, believe more fully, and try again with more steadfastness to grow into the likeness of our Lord. As we distrust our own power, we shall trust the power of our Redeemer, and render praise to God, who is the health of our countenance, and our God”*** (1SM 337.1).

***On the other hand, we are never to make our human weaknesses an excuse for not overcoming. “How often we have read over the description of Christ's baptism with no thought that there was any particular significance in it for us. But it means everything to us. It means that there can be no excuse for our living in alienation from God. You may claim much leniency because of your human nature, of your temptations and trials, and seek to excuse yourself for sin because of inherited tendencies,but Christ gave himself in behalf of humanity, and there is no reason for failure. Christ bore temptations such as you will never be called upon to bear. He suffered as you will never suffer.***

***He knew all your griefs, he has carried your sorrows. He has made it possible for you to be an overcomer. Do not say it is impossible for you to overcome. Do not say, "It is my nature to do thus and so, and I cannot do otherwise. I have inherited weaknesses that make me powerless before temptation." We know you cannot overcome in your own strength; but help has been laid upon One who is mighty to save. When God gave his only begotten Son, he provided everything essential to your salvation And "he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”*** (Signs of the Times,June 17, 1889, par. 11).

Those who daily walk with God, and daily strive to become all that He wants them to be, are covered by Christ’s imputed righteousness as long as they continue to strive toward that goal. **(Fact)** Heb 10:14, 38, is relevant here**: “For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified** [those who stay in the sanctifying process through a persistent daily connection with Jesus]. . . **. But if anyone draws back [gives up the daily struggle with self and sin], My soul has no pleasure in him.”**

**Let Us Pray**