

CHRISTIAN – BEWARE OF FAILING GOD’S GRACE AND FORFEITING YOUR SALVATION

Christians need to be reminded here at the very outset of this study that salvation is not an unforfeitable possession in this life. It only becomes unforfeitable at the end of life if one is sowing to the Spirit (CP Ro 8:1-14; 1Cor 9:27; Ga 6:7-8 with Rev 22:11-12). Right throughout scripture Christians are warned in one form or another against failing God’s grace and forfeiting their salvation (CP Mt 5:13 (also Mk 9:49-50; Lu 14:34-35); 6:19-21, 24 (also Lu 16:13); 12:30; Lu 13:22-27; Jn 15:4-6; Ro 6:16; 1Cor 9:27; 10:1-12; 2Cor 6:1; 7:1; 13:5; Php 2:12; 3:13-14; Col 2:6-8; 1Ti 6:17-19; He 2:1; 10:24-31; 12:1, 12-15, 25-29; 1Jn 2:15-17; Rev 2:1-7, 8-11, 12-17, 18-29; 3:1-6, 7-13, 14-22). These scriptures are not exhaustive, but representative of the many warning Christians against failing God’s grace and forfeiting their salvation. There are many in the parables of Jesus also. We cannot closely examine them all here but we will look at as many as possible so readers will be under no misapprehension that their salvation is a foregone conclusion, as so many believe (CP Mt 5:13; Mk 9:49-50; Lu 14:34-35).

Here Jesus likens Christians to salt, which seasons and preserves. Christians are to be seasoning agents in society to counteract the corrupt world system and advance God’s Kingdom in the earth (CP Mt 5:14-16; Mk 4:21-25). Christians who fail in this duty are like salt that has lost its “saltiness”. It no longer serves its purpose and is thrown out. So too those Christians who no longer serve God’s purpose will forfeit their salvation (Mt 6:19-21, 24; Lu 16:13). *Mammon* refers to earthly riches - material possessions and wealth. Here Jesus teaches Christians not to allow the acquisition of material possessions and wealth to become their life-goal because it will eventually estrange them from God. Christians must ever be alert to the danger of being seduced from their allegiance to God by the allurements of riches and material possessions. They must guard against any preoccupation at all with material things lest they become more important than the things of God (CP Mt 13:3-9, 18-23).

This is called the parable of the Sower. It perfectly describes the outcome for Christians who think they can serve both God and mammon – who are caught up in the pursuit of wealth and possessions. The term *deceitfulness of riches* in V 22 means that wealth gives a false sense of security. *Choke* means figuratively to overpower. The false sense of security emanating from material possessions and wealth overpowers the word of God in Christians and prevents them bearing fruit for the Kingdom. They are seduced by their wealth from continuing in God’s service. They become “savourless salt” and are no longer a beacon of God’s light in the world. Paul makes the same statement of claim (CP 1Ti 6:9-10). *Erred* here means seduced. Those who covet after wealth err from the faith. They will be seduced by their wealth away from God. The pursuit of wealth debases the mind, destroys Godly traits and makes Christians selfish, proud, and avaricious, which all lead to destruction and perdition.

Perdition refers to the state after death wherein exclusion from salvation is a realised fact, wherein

man, instead of becoming what he might have been in God, is eternally damned. This is a grim warning to Christians. *Perdition* is the final destiny of Christians focusing on earthly riches and serving mammon in this life, as opposed to serving God and storing up treasures for themselves in Heaven that will guarantee their eternal security in the next life (CP Lu 12:13-15). *Abundance* here means more than is needed, surplus to needs (CP Mt 12:30). Jesus makes it clear in this passage of scripture that there is no neutrality in Christianity. Christians not actively involved in doing the work of the gospel for Christ are actively involved in doing the work of the Devil in opposition to Him. Jesus has laid down the conditions of salvation and no one can be saved who does not comply with those conditions (CP Mt 7:21-27; Lu 6:46-49; 11:27-28 with Ro 2:13; Jas 1:22-25 also Rev 1:3). The core condition of salvation is strict obedience to God’s word (CP 1Sam 15:22-23; Psa 119:9 with Jn 14:15; 15:10, 14; 1Jn 2:3-6; Rev 14:12).

Most Christians believe that salvation depends solely upon confessing Christ as Lord, but the plain teaching of scripture is that one can only be saved through the narrow confines of a Christian walk totally consecrated to the service of God and completely yielded to the authority of His word (CP Lu 13:22-27). Jesus’ admonition to His disciple here to “*strive to enter in at the strait gate*” emphasises the difficulty Christians who are not doing the work of God’s word will encounter in securing their salvation. The word *strive* means struggle, fight, labour fervently, wrestle as in an award contest, straining every nerve to the uttermost toward the goal (CP 1Cor 9:24-27; Php 3:8-14). It is only by strenuously contending for the things of God, and rejecting out of hand the things that cause enmity with God, that Christians can secure a place for themselves in God’s eternal Kingdom. This expresses the earnestness Christians must have in getting rid of sin and walking in complete obedience to God’s word. It typifies the force required to take hold of the Kingdom, and is presented in scripture as the life-task of every professing Christian (CP Mt 7:13-14; 11:12; Php 2:12; He 4:1). Christians must order their lives to do the work of God’s word.

The violent who take the Kingdom of Heaven by force in Mt 11:12 are Christians who press in with ardent zeal and intense exertion to secure their salvation. They will allow nothing to hinder them from ensuring their place in God’s eternal Kingdom. *Violent* in this context means strong, forceful. *Take by force* means seize upon, claim for oneself eagerly (CP Lu 16:16). *Press* here means use forceful endeavours. What Jesus is saying in effect both here and Mt 11:12 is that the Kingdom of Heaven can only be possessed by those who press in with the most ardent zeal and intense exertions; with the utmost eagerness and effort. He is highlighting the difficulty of entering in for those who lack those qualifications. Christians must be relentless in their pursuit of the Kingdom (CP Jn 6:27; 12:25-26; Ga 2:20; Eph 4:17-32; Col 3:1-10; 1Ti 6:12; 2Pe 1:10-11; 2Jn 8).

Christians who are not bearing fruit for God’s eternal Kingdom will not be part of the Kingdom and it is folly for them to think they will. They fail God’s

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grace and will forfeit their salvation (CP Mt 7:19-20; Jn 15:1-8, 16). Jesus is talking to His disciples in Jn 15, and by extension every Christian in the church age, warning them of the dangers of not bearing fruit for His Kingdom. *Takeh away* means to cut off, sever. *He* is God. This refers to Christians not bearing fruit for God’s Kingdom being cut off, severed from God, their source of life (CP Mt 25:14-30; Lu 19:11-26). Here we have two parables which both teach what happens to fruitless Christians. Mt 25:14-30 is called the parable of the Talents, and Lu 19:11-26 is called the parable of the Pounds.

They teach the same thing: it is folly for Christians who profess faith in Christ for their salvation but bear no fruit for His Kingdom to think they are saved. Christ demands that Christians’ fruit be commensurate with what He has invested in them (CP Mt 5:16; Jn 15:8; Eph 2:10). God chose Christians to serve Him and He expects every one of them to bear fruit for His Kingdom. Otherwise they fail His grace and will forfeit their salvation (CP Mt 5:13-16; Mk 4:21-25; Lu 14:34-35; Jn 15:14-16). There are many in the church who believe that the punishment the unprofitable servants in the parables received for not trading in their master’s goods merely translates to loss of rewards in Heaven for Christians not doing the work of God’s word, but clearly that is not what scriptures teach at all, as this study plainly shows (CP Ro 6:16). The whole of what the Bible teaches is encapsulated in this verse: obedience to God means everlasting life; disobedience means eternal damnation. Paul affirms here that even though Christians are under grace it is still their responsibility to resist sin and obey God (CP V 11-13; 8:12-14; Eph 5:3-10; Col 3:1-13).

Christians can yield to sin and be damned to hell, or obey God unto everlasting life. They cannot serve sin and Satan and rule and reign with Christ in eternity (CP Mt 6:22-24; Jn 8:31-35; Ga 1:10; Jas 4:4; 1Jn 2:15). The only safety for Christians from sin and Satan is to be totally consecrated to the service of God and completely yielded to the authority of His word (CP Mt 12:43-45; Lu 11:23-26). Unless after their conversion to Christ Christians quickly fill the void in their lives left by sin with the things of God, their old sinful nature will reassert itself and they will actually be worse off than they were before their conversion (CP He 6:4-6; 10:26-31; 2Pe 2:20-22).

There are many Christians in the contemporary church who contend that once-saved Christians can never lose their salvation and therefore those scriptures are not referring to Christians per se, but to those who have been exposed to the gospel and rejected it. That is not correct of course because only once-saved Christians have tasted the things of Heaven and been part of the work of the Holy Spirit. And only once-saved Christians have experienced the goodness of God’s word and received a foretaste of eternal life. And last but by no means least, only those who had faith in the first place can depart from it (CP He 3:1, 14; 10:32). Christians choose for themselves if they want to stay saved (CP Mt 24:10-12; 1Ti 4:1; 2Ti 4:1-4; He 2:1-3; 3:12 – 4:1; 10:38; 12:35).

“Once saved” does not mean “always saved”, as scriptures plainly teach. There are conditions attached to receiving the final reward for every Christian (CP

1Cor 9:24-27; Php 2:12). Paul underlines four conditions in 1Cor 9:24-27: Christians must be as earnest to be saved as athletes are to win a race (CP V 24 with Php 3:8-14; He 12:1-2); Christians must be temperate in all things (CP V 25 with 2Pe 1:4-11); Christians must fight with absolute confidence in victory (CP V 26 with 1Ti 6:11-14); Christians must keep the body under control and bring it into subjection (CP V 27 with Ro 8:12-13; 12:1-2; 1Cor 3:16-17).

In Php 2:12 Paul is exhorting Christians to make the self-abnegation and humility displayed by Jesus in V 5-8 a fact in their own lives (CP V 5-8). V 12 begs the question: why does salvation need to be worked out with “fear and trembling” if it is already a foregone conclusion. The answer is that salvation is not a foregone conclusion – it is only fully certain for those sowing to the Spirit at the end of their earthly life (CP Mt 7:21-27; Lu 13:22-27; Ro 2:13; Ga 6:7-8; 2Ti 2:12; Jas 2:22-26; Rev 2:1-7, 8-11, 12-17, 18-29; 3:1-6, 7-13, 14-22; 22:11-12). *Work out* in Php 2:12 means “carry to its ultimate conclusion”, which means, as those scriptures all teach, that Christians are individually responsible for obedience to God’s word in the process of sanctification (CP also Mt 6:19-20; 2Cor 13:5; 1Ti 6:17-19; 2Pe 1:4-11; Jude 1:1-3).

Fear and trembling in Php 2:12 refers to the attitude with which Christians are to pursue their sanctification. It involves a healthy fear of offending God and a dread of sinning against Him, and of the consequences that may follow (CP Psa 2:11-12; 15:1-5; 85:9; 119:119-120; Pr 3:7-8; 9:10; 14:27; 16:6; Ecc 12:13; Isa 66:1-2; Lu 12:4-5; 1Cor 9:24-27; 10:12-14; Eph 6:5-8; He 6:1-6; 10:26-31). While it is God who actually produces the good works and Spiritual fruit in the lives of Christians (CP Php 2:13 with Hos 14:8; Jn 15:5; 1Cor 12:6; 1Ti 1:12), He can only produce good works and fruit in those who conform to His word and allow the Holy Spirit to outwork in their lives (CP Mt 3:7-10; Lu 8:5-9, 11-15; Jn 15:1-6; Col 1:22-23; He 2:2-3).

Peter underlines nine other conditions of salvation for Christians as well as temperance in 2Pe 1:4-11, which we looked at earlier. Let us look at them again (CP 2Pe 1:4-11). The clear teaching here is that to ensure their salvation Christians must develop the graces Peter enumerates in V 5-7. If they are not evident in a Christian’s life it is because that Christian has failed to develop them (CP V 9). In the Greek construction of this verse the word *forgotten* here points to a deliberate act. It suggests that by failing to make the effort to grow in grace as instructed in V 5, that Christian has in effect wilfully turned his or her back on the stand they made for Christ when they were first saved. This implies the possibility of failing God’s grace and reverting to their old way of life (CP 2:20-22). The phrases, “... giving all diligence” in 1:5 and, “give diligence” in 1:10, demonstrate that Christians must be actively involved in their Spiritual growth (CP also 1Cor 15:58; 2Cor 7:1; Eph 4:1; Col 3:12-17; 2Pe 3:18). Christians who pursue the qualities listed in 2Pe 1:5-7 will never fail God’s grace and forfeit their salvation. This in turn though means that those who do not pursue them will fail His grace and forfeit their salvation (CP V 10-11). We will look at how Christians are to demonstrate the expression of the

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love they are to develop for each other, as directed in V 7, when we examine 1Jn 3:16-18 shortly (CP V 7).

Before moving on here, we need to look in depth at a condition of salvation Jesus cited in Mk 11 and made the subject of a parable in Mt 18 called the parable of the Unmerciful Servant (CP Mt 18:23-35; Mk 11:25-26). We learn from this that the forgiveness of God, though freely given to repentant sinners nevertheless remains conditional upon their willingness to forgive others. The judgement the king pronounced on the unmerciful servant in the parable is the equivalent of unforgiving Christians failing God’s grace and forfeiting their salvation, because just as the servant could never repay his debt to the king, Christians can never repay their debt to God. Christians have had all their sins forgiven by God, so they must forgive others in return (CP Psa 103:10-12; Mt 6:14-15).

There is no place in God’s eternal purpose for those who fail His grace (CP Mt 22:2-14). This is called the parable of the marriage feast. It illustrates two truths – one is that as the king called all men to the marriage feast of his son, so God calls all mankind to partake of the Kingdom benefits of His son, Jesus (CP Mt 11:28-30; Jn 3:16; 7:37). No one is excluded from responding to God’s universal call to salvation, but sadly, and this is the second truth the parable illustrates: not all who respond to God’s call are totally consecrated to the service of God and completely yielded to the authority of His word. They want to be saved, but on their terms not Christ’s. They do not comply with the conditions of salvation He has laid down and thus fail His grace and forfeit their salvation. It needs to be re-stated, once-saved does not mean always-saved (CP 1Cor 10:1-12).

This is plain teaching for New Testament Christians: as despite all their blessings a whole generation of Old Testament Israelites were denied entry into the Promised Land and died in the wilderness because they failed God’s grace, so too New Testament Christians can fail God’s grace and forfeit their salvation. V 6 and 11 clearly teach that what befell the Israelites is an Old Testament type of what can happen to New Testament Christians (CP V 6, 11 and 12). V 12 says it all – it is folly for Christians who are not complying with the conditions of salvation laid down by Jesus to think they are saved (CP He 3:7 – 4:11; 12:14-16; 2Pe 20-22). Rest in He 3 and 4 for the ancient Israelites refers to the Promised Land; for New Testament Christians it refers to the Spiritual rest now and throughout eternity for all who put their trust in Christ and conform to His word (CP Mt 11:28-30; He 12:22-25).

Christians need to be reminded here also that they cannot love the world and the things of the world and be saved. As friends of the world they are enemies of God – failing His grace and forfeiting their salvation (CP Ro 12:1-2 and 1Jn 2:15-17 with Jas 4:1-4; 2Pe 2:20). In Ro 12:1-2 Paul exhorts Christians to set themselves apart wholly unto God and be totally consecrated to His service (CP Mt 6:19-21, 24). In 1Jn 2:15-17 John admonishes Christians not to allow themselves to become ensnared by the world. While the Christians James addresses have committed spiritual adultery with the world, they are not yet totally ensnared. But those Peter refers to are, and he

spells out what their end will be. A good scriptural example of a Christian being ensnared by the world system is Demas, one of Paul’s most dependable and trusted co-workers in the gospel (CP Col 4:14; Phm 1:20 with 2Ti 4:10). There is no record in scripture of him having done so, but unless Demas returned to doing the work of God’s word, he failed God’s grace and has forfeited His salvation.

None of this is teaching that Christians have to completely disassociate themselves from the world – that would defeat God’s purpose for them to be his witness in the earth. They must be in the world to be its light (CP Mt 5:14-16 with Jn 17:15-20; Ac 1:8; 1Cor 5:9-13). It should be noted here that it is Christians Paul is referring to as the fornicators, covetous, idolaters, foul tongued abusers, drunkards and extortioners in 1Cor 5:11, the same as in Ga 5:19-21 (CP Ga 5:19-21). There are some in the church who teach that Paul is not referring to Christians here as the ones involved in those sins, but non-Christians. Again that is not correct. Inheriting the Kingdom of God is only an option for Christians, not non-Christians. Non-Christians will not fail God’s grace and forfeit salvation because they commit those sins, but because they have rejected Jesus (CP Jn 3:3, 5, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:40, 47; 20:31; Ro 1:16-17). Furthermore, non-Christians cannot distinguish between walking in the Spirit or obeying the lusts of the flesh – only Christians can do that, which Paul had just called upon them to do (CP Ga 5:16-18 with Ro 8:1). Paul’s warning against the sins of Ga 5:19-21 is directed to the Galatian Christians and by extension to every Christian throughout the church age, who do such things (CP 1Cor 5:1-12; 6:18-20; Eph 5:1-8; Col 3:1-10; 1Th 4:1-7; 5:22; He 12:14-16; 1Pe 2:11).

Let us look now at the so-called “Great Commission” for which Christ holds Christians responsible (CP Mt 28:19-20 also Mk 16:15-16). Jesus commands Christians in these scriptures to preach the gospel. Peter and Paul both acknowledge it as a command (CP Ac 10:42-43; Ro 1:14; 1Cor 9:16-17). For Christians to call this the “Great Commission” is not only a misnomer, it contradicts scripture. It is a command, not a commission. A commission can be rejected – and there are many Christians in the contemporary church who do not see winning souls to Christ as incumbent upon them personally – but a command has to be obeyed and Christians can only prove their love for Christ and ensure their salvation by obeying His commands (CP 119:9, 16, 24, 47, 77, 174; Mt 19:17; Jn 14:15, 21, 23-24; 15:10; 1Cor 7:19; 1Jn 2:3-5; 3:22-24; 5:2-3; 2Jn 6; Rev 22:14).

The word *observe* in Mt 28:18 means to obey, fulfil a duty. If Christians are to teach new converts how important it is to obey God’s word they must first obey it themselves. Christ’s command to Christians is to “go ye”. *Ye* is plural, thus it is incumbent upon every Christian – not only those in public ministry as so many think – to go and preach the gospel, win souls to Christ and advance God’s Kingdom in the earth. *Teach* in Mt 28:19 (KJV), means literally “make disciples”. The clear command to Christians is that every one of them has to go forth and preach the gospel, make disciples, baptise them and teach them that they in turn must do likewise (CP Jn 15:16, 26-27; Ac 1:8 with Ro 10:13-15, 17; Col 1:3-6; 1Pe 2:9).

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Knowing that the gospel saves is not something Christians can keep to themselves. It must be shared with the unsaved (CP Mt 5:14-16; Mk 4:21-25; Lu 8:16-18). Jesus admonishes Christians here to put into practice what they hear. They have not been given the light of Divine Truth to keep to themselves. It must be proclaimed to all who will listen. Those who do not share it fail God’s grace and will forfeit their salvation, which we also learned earlier in our study of both the parables of the Talents and the Pounds (CP 1Jn 3:16-18).

This is yet another way Christians can fail God’s grace and forfeit their salvation. Those who profess to love their fellow Christians must not only express that love in words but also in deeds. Christians are only deluding themselves thinking they are saved if they have the wherewithal, but do not meet the needs of their brothers and sisters in Christ who are wanting (CP Jas 2:14-26). The only faith that can save is that demonstrated by works out of Christians’ love for God and for each other. Notwithstanding that they profess to love God, it avails Christians nothing if they do not unconditionally and self-sacrificially help other Christians in need (CP Ga 6:9-10). Christians prove their love for God by the expression of their love for each other and their obedience to God’s word (CP 2Pe 1:7). Those living for God and loving the brethren unconditionally and self-sacrificially can rest assured in the knowledge that they are saved and will have their prayers answered (CP Psa 34:15; Pr 15:29; Jn 15:7; Ro 13:8-10; 1Jn 3:19-24; 4:16-21; 5:11-15).

We will bring this study to a close here, fittingly with Christ’s final words to Christians concerning their salvation in His letters to the seven churches in Asia, in Revelation (CP Rev 1:9-11, 19). The significance of these churches is that while they were actual churches which existed at that time, they are also representative of all churches in all ages (CP Rev 2:1-7; 2:8-11; 2:12-17; 2:18-29; 3:1-6; 3:7-13; 3:14-22). The Spiritual condition of these churches is representative of the Spiritual condition of all local churches throughout the church age. These letters are to be interpreted as not only applying for that generation of Christians, but as having an ongoing application for all generations, including ours. Remember that churches are individual Christians formed into a body whom God holds individually responsible for their salvation (CP Mt 6:19-20; Lu 13:23-27; Jn 6:27; Php 2:12; 1Ti 6:17-19; 2Pe 1:5-11; Jude 1:3). Christ’s letters to the seven churches is a warning to every individual Christian which they must heed or fail God’s grace and forfeit their salvation.

Christians must continually examine their beliefs and activities and ensure they conform to what Christ expects of His church (CP 2Cor 13:5). In His letters to the seven churches Jesus has undertaken to save only those Christians who repent and overcome the evil in their midst. He underlines the consequences of disobedience and spiritual neglect and concludes each letter with an imperative to all who have ears to hear, to listen to what the Spirit is saying to them.

(CP Rev 2:1-7). In His letter to the church of Ephesus here, Jesus is warning Christians in all ages of church history that moral purity, zeal for the truth, and disciplined service is no substitute for the love for

Christ which the Christians at Ephesus had forsaken. Unless they repent, Jesus will remove the church from its place in God’s eternal Kingdom. This teaches that Christians in whom love for Christ and obedience to His word is not preeminent, fail God’s grace and will forfeit their salvation (CP 2:8-11). Here Jesus warns Christians that they are called to suffer persecution for His sake, but to remain steadfast in faith and He will give them a “crown of life” - the reward of everlasting life with Jesus (CP 2:12-17). In this letter to the church in Pergamos, Jesus warns Christians that although they may still believe in Him and not deny their faith in spite of persecution, any compromise with teaching that promotes idolatry or immorality - the doctrine of Balaam - means failing God’s grace and forfeiting salvation. The two-edged sword in V 12 here symbolises God’s word, which either cuts away sin from churches and individual Christians, or it cuts away churches and individual Christians from the Kingdom, in judgement. Nothing and no one is impervious to God’s word (CP He 4:12-13).

Although Christians may abound in good works, love, service, faith and patient endurance, it will count for nothing toward their salvation if they compromise God’s word in any way and engage in heathen practices (CP Rev 2:18-29). The word *fornication* in V 20 is used metaphorically of Spiritual adultery - Christians involved in worldly pursuits. *That woman Jezebel* symbolises the seduction of Christians from the truth by false teachers in the church. *Eating meat sacrificed to idols* violates the principle of strong Christians being sensitive to weaker Christians’ needs. This symbolises Christians being more concerned about their own self-indulgent pleasures and pursuits than the needs of fellow Christians (CP Ro 14:1-2, 13-15, 21; 1Cor 6:12; 8:4-13; 10:13-24).

Christ clearly warns Christians against taking their salvation or their faith for granted in his next letter, to the church at Sardis (CP Rev 3:1-6). “... *I will not blot his name out of the Book of Life*” clearly proves that Christians can fail God’s grace and forfeit their salvation. Only the names of those who strictly conform to God’s word remain in the Book and are saved. The rest are blotted out (CP Psa 139:13-16; Dan 12:1; Php 4:6; Rev 21:27 with Ex 32:31-34; Psa 69:28; 109:13; Rev 20:11-15). Knowing that their names are already in the Book of Life should be incentive enough for Christians to continually examine themselves and ensure that they are not blotted out.

Now let us examine how Christ evaluates the church at Laodicea (CP Rev 3:14-22). The Laodicean church is representative of “nominal” Christians throughout church history; they are neither hot nor cold. Their lives revolve around luxury living and accumulating material wealth and possessions, while all around them souls are dying and going to hell in need of the gospel. Laodicean Christians are indifferent to Spiritual things. In fact, Jesus is so shut out of their lives He has had to issue an invitation for them to fellowship with Him, “... *behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me*” (CP V 20). The irony of this scripture is that Christians use it to lead sinners to Christ to get saved, when in fact Jesus is addressing Christians who

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need saving themselves (CP Lu 12:35-40; Jn 14:23; 2Cor 6:14-18). There can be no argument about what Jesus teaches in His letter to the church at Laodicea: those Christians have failed God’s grace and forfeited their salvation (CP V 14-16).

The sum of the teaching in the letters to the seven churches is that Christ promises to save only those Christians who have repented, overcome the evil in their midst, persevered in faith and remained faithful to God’s word in spite of persecution, and love other Christians unconditionally and self sacrificially. These Christians belong to the church at Philadelphia, the only church out of the seven He wrote to, that Christ promises to save from the tribulation - *the hour of temptation that is to come upon the world to try them that dwell upon the earth* (CP Rev 3:7-13 (See also author’s comments on Rev 1:4, 2:1-7, 2:8-11, 2:12-17, 2:18-29, 3:1-6, 3:7-13 and 3:14-22 in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**.

Also see author’s studies *The cost of discipleship: forsaking all for Jesus*, *The significance of the seven churches in Revelation*, and *Conditions of entry into Heaven* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)**, *Christians - flee from idolatry* and *Christians, love not the world* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 2)**).

As stated at the outset, the scriptures subject of the study are not exhaustive but representative of the many in God’s word warning Christians against failing God’s grace and forfeiting their salvation. The scriptures we have studied here will suffice for the purpose of this exercise, but Christians are urged to search the scriptures for themselves to see what other conditions apply. Christians cannot afford to be under any misapprehension concerning the security of their salvation if they are not strictly conforming to God’s word.