

February 26, 2014

Psalm 125:1 (ESV), ***“Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever.”***

When I was growing up we vacationed for many summers in the Estes Park Colorado area. My parents would rent a cabin near there and we would spend our days sight- seeing and hiking. One of the things I remember about the cabin that we stayed in was that it had a perfect view of what is called the Mummy Range. It's called this because it looks like a mummy in repose. I was always very fascinated by this and spent what seemed like an inordinate amount of time looking out the window at the peaks of this range. You know what I discovered? It was always there and is still there today!

Those who place their ***“trust in the LORD”*** are just like that mountain range and like Mount Zion (which is where the city of Jerusalem is built) in that they are eternal in nature. The true Christ follower will always be in fellowship with the Lord there is no turning back once one has repented of their sins and believed in Jesus Christ. Once God has saved you from the life of sin and the resultant eternal separation from Him He will not let you go. He *cannot* let you go because He is the all-powerful, all-knowing and all-present God. In John 10:27-28 it says, ***“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand.”***

This is the Doctrine of Eternal Security and this is a bedrock of Baptist and Christian theology. Psalm 46:5 says, ***“God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns.”*** If one believes that God is an all-powerful and sovereign God then one has to understand that God does not make errors so once He has redeemed you He will never let you go. You cannot believe in an all powerful God and believe that you can lose your salvation.

So the question then becomes for many of us: What about that man or woman who we know who in the past professed to be a believer, was baptized, but today has absolutely nothing to do with Christ or His church? Is this person a believer? Or have they lost their salvation? The answers to those questions are; no and no. Scripture tells us that once the Lord has redeemed us He does not then let us go. This being true then it is logical to conclude that the man or woman who responded to an invitation at summer camp, or a youth rally, and was baptized but their life today bears no resemblance of the life surrendered to the Lord, cannot be a Christ follower.

This is an issue that is near and dear to my heart and one that I believe that Lord has laid on my heart. I remember when I was in one of my former pastorates being confronted with this when I had several dear older saints who had adult children who had nothing to do with Christian fellowship or God. The common refrain I would hear from them was, “but they were baptized when they were 10 years old” or some version thereof. The thought behind that statement or rather the assurance they were giving themselves was that their child was “saved” because of that baptism or profession of faith long ago.

This is one of the big fallacies in the church today and is one of the reasons that the church is so ineffective and why there is a deep need for the church to be re-evangelized. In order for a person to truly be a Christ follower they must follow Him. This means that they must abide in Him and remain in Him. The word salvation is translated from the Greek to mean both

deliverance and preservation. We are delivered from sin but we are then also preserved from sin and preserved in fellowship with the Lord. Salvation is not a onetime event it is a lifelong continuing reality in our lives.

In John 15:4-6 says, ***“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in Him, He it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me he is thrown away like a branch that withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.”*** As Christians we are to abide in Christ and this means that our lives are to be markedly different from the world. One cannot rest assured in salvation is there is life is no different than it was before they prayed a prayer or walked down an aisle. In 1 John 2:4-5 it says, ***“Whoever says, ‘I know Him’ but does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in Him, but whoever keeps His word, in Him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we know that we are in Him.”***

I believe with all my heart that there are countless thousands (maybe more) sitting in churches or *not* sitting in churches who are under a false assurance of salvation. We are not saved by our works or by how we live our lives but our lives should reflect the reality of our salvation.

I am fully aware that this devotional today might be a bit sensitive for some. I encourage you to examine your life as the apostle Paul wrote. Is your life really the life of a Christ follower? Or is it a life that is consumed with the ways of this world?