

Why Christians Doubt Their Salvation

Where should Bible reading and prayer be in your life of priorities?

Where is it?

Listen to what an author wrote in his book.

I have often been tempted to write a book called the “Sensuous Christian”. We have the sensuous woman, the sensuous man, the sensuous couple, the sensuous divorcee, Ad nauseam, Ad nauseam. All have become best sellers. Why not a book called the sensuous Christian? What is the sensuous Christian, He writes? One dictionary defines sensuous as pertaining to the senses, or sensible objects. Highly susceptible to the senses

The sensuous Christian is one who lives by his feelings instead of living by his understanding of the Word of God. The sensuous Christian can not be moved to service, prayer, or study unless he feels like it. His Christian life is only as effective as the intensity of his present feeling. When he experiences spiritual euphoria he is a whirlwind of godly activity. When he is depressed he is a spiritual incompetent. He constantly seeks new fresh spiritual experiences and he uses them to determine the Word of God. His inner feelings become the ultimate test of truth. The sensuous Christian doesn't need to study the Word of God because he already knows the will of God by his feelings. He doesn't want to know God; he just wants to experience God. The sensuous Christian equates childlike faith with ignorance. He thinks that when the Bible calls us to childlike faith it means faith without content; a faith without understanding. He doesn't know that the bible teaches that in evil be babes, but in your thinking be mature. (I Corinthians 14:20). He doesn't understand how many times in Paul's writings when he says “I would not have you to be ignorant brethren...”.

The sensuous Christian goes his merry way until he encounters the pains of life that is not so merry and he folds up. He usually ends up embracing a relational theology that is the most dreadful curse on modern Christianity, where personal relationships and experience take precedence over the Word of God. If the scripture calls us to action and we think that it might interfere with our relationships with others then the scripture must be compromised. The highest law for the sensuous Christian is that bad feelings must be avoided at all cost.

Does this sound like what is going on in churches today?

Are our churches filled with sensuous Christians?

We need to learn to entertain and make people “feel good”.

This is totally opposite of what Peter was talking about.

We have certain responsibilities as Christians in order to maximize what God has done for us.

2 Peter 1

1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Notice with me now.

I There is a call to diligence in verse 5 & verse 10

Now the reason Peter is giving us a call to diligence is because of what was already written in the text.

Now whenever you see the words in verse 5 that says, “and beside this,” then you know that there is already something else that has already been said that we need to consider.

God in heaven has given to us 2 special things written here in the text.

Look back with me in verse 3:

Vs. 3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

According to the Bible God has given the Christian everything he needs pertaining to;

1 all things that pertain to life

2 all things that pertain to godliness

That is what the bible says.

Now the vehicle in which these 2 things are carried is found in verse 4.

Look at verse 4 with me.

Vs. 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust

Where can we find exceeding great and precious promises class?

Right here in the Bible.

So in recapping;

- 1 We can find all things that pertain to living life
- 2 We can find all things that pertain to godliness

Right here in this B - I - B - L - E. Yes that's the book for me. I stand alone on the Word of God, the B - I - B - L - E

What is our responsibility?

It is to take what we have and work diligently to maximize it in our lives.

Since God has given us what we need, we need to as Christians need to get busy and make the most of it, as we walk through life.

Another place in the New Testament is says this:

Philippians 2: 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Now when you first read this it sounds almost like God is going to make you live the Christian life.

Look another verse here in Philippians 2.

Vs. 12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

What does that mean?

In the world of Christianity God has put something into play that I will call

The "Divine Cooperative"

It is true that God has given us everything we need, but that is no excuse for us to just be a pew warmer.

The Divine Cooperative is;

Take the work that God has worked in you, and work it out in our lives.

Take the things that God has given us and diligently apply them.

One thing you will learn when you study the Bible is that for every privilege that God gives there is a responsibility.

Example;

Sanctify	Set apart
Justify	Sinless

The doctrine of justification

Simply put this doctrine is when we are blood bought it is as if we had never sinned.

In other words we need to become practically what you already are position-ally.

It is taking that which God says is true of your position in heaven, and then living it out everyday so that it becomes true of you in your daily walk.

In order to do this is going to require something of us.

It will not happen by osmosis.

You can't take the Bible and put it under your pillow and sleep on it hoping that it will filter up through your brain in a passive way.

God's Word has to be implemented or put into action

That can only happen by and through diligence.

There are some requirements to this call.

You have to have the basic equipment to start with.

There are 8 Characteristics listed in this text. Seven really as faith is the foundation.

Add to your what? Your faith.

Let me just say that if you don't know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. If you have never placed your faith in Him and become a Christian, then all of these other virtues which you are to diligently apply in your own life will not work.

You are not on the right frequency yet.

Faith is the foundation of all the rest. That is a requirement.

What is the personal responsibility demanded of us in the matter of holy living?

Someone has said that in I Peter we have a little bit of Divine mathematics going on.

Notice verse 2

2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you....

Notice now in verse 5 and it says take that which has been multiplied unto you and add unto it.

Then it gives this list.

God does the multiplying and we do the adding.

You might ask Brother Tommy is there anything that I must do to work for or add in order to obtain salvation?

Absolutely not as it relates to your perfect standing before God

Salvation is faith in Jesus Christ plus nothing.

HOWEVER

After you have put your faith in Christ it is your responsibility to **grow** in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ

Are Works part of salvation?

Ephesians 2:8

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Titus 3:5a

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us,

Ephesians 2:10

For **we are his workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

What is God saying here.

No works in order to be saved.

HOWEVER

Once we become a Christian we are to become diligent and get at it.
What does the Bible say?
Find out and do it!!!

Let's take another look here at the characteristics mentioned in vs. 5, but before we do let me explain what diligence Peter is talking about.

When you see the phrase "giving all diligence" we could be describing a runner who is coming up on the finish line and they began to press toward the mark, giving every ounce of energy that they can possibly muster. I mean they are pouring it on.

This is the passion of the diligence.

Winning is everything.

Diligence = Greek word *spoudhv Spoude (spoo-day) hurry about hurring.*

Add = Greek word. *Ejpicorhgev w Epichoregeo (epee hor dee geh) add to*

This is the word from which we get our modern day choreography.

You take something that you already have and you add to it to make it spectacular.

This is based on situations in Bible times when a wealthy patron would finance an elaborate religious Greek play. These wealthy people would get into competition with one another to see who could put on the most expensive and elaborate play of the day.

No cost was too great
They spared no expense.
Money was not an object.
Only the best will do.

What Peter is saying is this.

Our Christian walk should be strenuously involved like an athlete coming to the finish line.

Our Christian walk should be extravagantly involved. No cost should be too great.

Give it everything you've got in order to maximize you walk with Christ.

Now this is so different than what we see in our world today.

The Bible study habits of many Christians today are embarrassing.

Do you know how some people like to get a word of knowledge?

They will open their Bible with their eyes closed and randomly point their finger to a verse on the opened page and think that this is God Talking to them.

This is not how God wants us to be diligent.

This is not how God intends for us to grow and to know Him.

The lack of study and diligence as we try to know what God wants to know from His Holy Word is probably one of the most serious of crimes committed by Christians.

God says in Peter that this is not acceptable.

He says;

Pull out all the stops.

No cost was too great

Spared no expense

Money was not an object

Only the best will do

No effort is too exhaustive to apply these truths in your life.

These 7 things we are to diligently apply and practice them habitually.

Teaching ended here 12-3-2006

II The Characteristics of diligence

1. Virtue Manly energy / courage to have moral excellence.
2. Knowledge Deeper more perfect knowledge that results in moral living.
Go through Peter and underline this word.
3. Temperance Self Control / Inner Control of passions and sensual appetites.
4. Patience Not swerving from the faith during trials. Perseverance

Temperance in power over what is inside of you

Patience is power over what is outside of you

Both of those things are suppose to be true in the Christians life.

5. godliness Reverence and holiness before God.
6. Brotherly kindness Love of the brethren
7. Charity More love in a general sense.

Peter is saying that God has given us all things that pertain to life.
Peter is saying that God has given us all things that pertain to godliness.

Where has God given us these things?
Through the precious promises of God

Now your job is to with all effort and all diligence without any concern of cost or energy
get busy growing.

You will grow by putting into action these 7 things into your life.

It is interesting to note how these things are listed.

Everything starts with faith.
It all finishes spectacularly in love

All of the graces in between spring out of faith, and find their greatest and highest glory
in the concept of human charity.

They are built one upon another.

FAITH

First We get faith or saved by the blood of Christ.

To a new convert sin becomes an ugly thing.

behold, all things are become new. II Corinthians 5:17

*Many times a new convert will get save and say to the preacher that they feel very uncomfortable
about doing such and such.*

VIRTUE

When we get saved God develops VIRTUE in our lives and virtue makes sin very ugly.

KNOWLEDGE

After you get virtue and sin become very ugly we should hunger for the Word of God.
We begin to seek after knowledge from the Word of God.

TEMPERANCE

What follows knowledge is once you learn what the Bible says you then have a desire to
control yourself.

PATIENCE

When you begin to battle with yourself on the basis of the knowledge of the Word of
God, you begin to have patience with those around you who have similar struggles and
problems.

GODLINESS

On the basis of that you then become more godly.

BROTHERLY LOVE

When you become more godly you have a desire to reach out to your brothers and sisters around you.

Isn't it just like God to care?

CHARITY

When this godliness takes place this culminates into the all encompassing love one for another. This is the graduation.

What Pete says is that God has given us everything that we need in order for this chain reaction to take place in your life.

Our job is to diligently apply the principles of the Bible day by day.

God's promise is that if we are diligent and apply these things they will become habit.

You can't fake it.

No pain, no gain.

No read

No pray

No church regularly

Then you are just fooling yourself.

III Notice the completeness of diligence.

There are 7 of them

They cover all of our relationships.

They cover all of our attitudes as Christians.

The first 2 are active graces. (doing)

The second 2 are passive graces. (submissive)

The fifth one has to do with our relationship with God.

The sixth one has to do with how we function in the church

The last one helps us get along in the whole world

Now don't pick out one that you think you can do best and say I will major on just this one.

God says all of these are for all of us to develop all the time in all of our lives.

It could be compared to the fruit of the spirit.

It isn't fruits of the spirit.

It is like grapes in a cluster. You don't get one without getting all.

The works of the flesh are plural, but

The fruit of the spirit is singular.

The fruit of the spirit is that overwhelming 9 fold character that develops in the life of a Christian who is under the control of the spirit of God.

When you have the fruit of the spirit you don't just have one, but all of those things presently developing in your life.

Just like the characteristics we are discussing today.

Saved + diligent godly habits = developing growing Christian.

IV The conclusion of diligence

Vs. 8 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible says that if we diligently develop these characteristics 3 things will happen.

If these characteristics;

1 Permanence of Character

a. Be in you = These things become yours permanently. They become an abiding possession. Permanence of Character

Someone has written that character comes as the result of persistent action.

Just keep up with diligent reading, and praying.

Never stop and never give up the habit pattern of reading and praying.

2 Depth of Character

b. and abound = Not just enough to get by on. An abundant supply. Such depth of character as to encourage other people

John 10:10 I am come that they **might** have **life**, and that they **might** have it more abundantly

3 Reality of Character

c, Ye will be neither barren nor unfruitful = If you are diligently trying to develop these characteristics in your life, then you will become like Jesus Christ.

Who is the greatest example of virtue / knowledge / temperance / patience / godliness / brotherly kindness / charity?

Jesus Christ

When He walked on this earth He was the model of everything that is on this list.

When we diligently apply the truths of the Word of God to our lives we become like the one who's name we carry. We become Christ like.

We should try to become like Him so that our name is not a mockery.

The Bible is an interesting book to study.

It will always tell you what you are supposed to do.

Often it will tell you what happens if you do what you are suppose to do.

Also it will sometimes tell you what will happen if you don't do what you are supposed to do.

Let me give you the opposite of diligence right here from the Bible.
Bible says here is what happens if you do.

Here is what will happen if you don't.
Notice here with me verse 9

9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

Is it possible to be a Christian and not be implementing these graces in your life?

ABSOLUTELY

There are many Christians who will barely make it and they will be dragging through the pearly gates with the smell of the smoke of hell on their clothes.

Now the Bible talks in I Corinthians about 3 types of men.

Carnal man
Spiritual man
Natural man

Now I don't believe that God will let this behavior go on indefinitely before He deals with it.

You might say well I have been living like this for a long time and God hasn't done anything about it yet.

Remember one thing. God's wheels grind slow, but sure. He is not finished with you by a long shot.

If verse 9 is you then there are 3 things that can be said about you.

1. You lack spiritual power.

It says "he that lacketh these things" What things?

Virtue / knowledge / temperance / patience / godliness / brotherly love / charity

Is it possible for a Christian not to have these things.

Absolutely.

It is not right. It is not what God wants.

I know some Christians who live like they have never known Christ.

Never read God's word.

They never pray.

Come to church for a show. Would not come if they thought they could get away with it.

In other words these are spiritually retarded.

2. You lack spiritual perception.

He is blind. He has spiritual eye disease.

He is near sighted. He can not see afar off.

He is living for the here and now.

He has no spiritual sight.

He has no spiritual foresight the ability to envision possible future problems or obstacles

He has no spiritual insight. a clear perception of something

He is just blind.

Many Christians running around the world today just don't have any sense.

They stumble from one problem to another.

They become prey for any and every false religion that comes along.

They are not spending any time in the Word of God developing their spiritual lives and so they are just lacking totally in perception.

They are the very best example of the sensuous Christian.

Just live by their feelings. No sense of duty or obligation.

3. They loose their spiritual privilege.

Vs. 9 *and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins*

⊗ Can you imagine this? Can you imagine someone who has been saved by the power that is in the blood and is free from the bondage of sin and shame, and this person forgets what it is like to be lost, so that they forget how important it is to be saved.

People this happens in the Christian faith.

People become so negligent in their spiritual walk until they fall back into the pig pen.

Maybe some of you are like this.

You can probably point back to a time when as a young person you accepted Christ, but you have not been diligent in your Christian walk. You have sort of just been floating along with the tide. You come to church when it is convenient. You try to put on the outward appearance so that everybody thinks you are ok, but down in your heart you just haven't been developing anything at all spiritual.

If you were arrested for being a Christian there would not be enough evidence to convict you.

Ⓜ The Bible says that if we don't take these special promises found in the Word of God and use them to develop spiritual habits we come to the place where we loose the privilege of being used of God in a mighty way.

You don't loose your salvation. The Bible doesn't teach that.

Ⓜ One of the greatest hurts for a teacher or preacher of the gospel is for him to preach his heart out service after service and people turn a deaf ear to what is preached.

Ⓜ You really haven't prepared to come to church. You stayed up too late watching TV You are so tired you don't have anything to give God.

We come in and sit down and we are barely there.

There is no diligence. Sometimes we don't even open our Bibles.

We don't take any notes.

We are not involved in the song service.

Let me ask you a question as lovingly as I can.

Ⓜ If you don't take advantage of the hour that you have given to God on Sunday to get everything out of that song service and sermon that you can milk it for, what in the world are you doing with your time the rest of the week?

How we respond in church is a pretty good indication of where we are in our walk with God.

People are not really diligent about showing up.
Not diligent about reading and studying their Bible everyday.
Not diligent about their prayer life.
Not diligent about their witness.
Not diligent about their testimony.
They make a mockery out of the name of Christ by their poor testimony
They act as if there is no spiritual guideline.

This hurts the preacher and it is an affront to God.

The contrast;
People who are not diligent are without spiritual power
People who are not diligent are without spiritual perception
People who are not diligent are without spiritual privilege

Striving for holy living without Bible reading and prayer is like a farmer being successful by planting his crop and not showing back up at the field until harvest.

You might ask; Why can't I just be holy because I'm a Christian?
Answer; We are not home yet.

Down here on this earth we much have will power and diligence as we race toward the mark.

If we are not diligent in our Bible reading
If we are not diligent in our prayer life
If we are not diligent and consistent in our church attendance
If we are not diligent in the things of God

Then we will never achieve the holy living.
We will always be a baby Christian who is open to any and everything that comes
Along.

There is one final thing in this text.

V The coronation of diligence

Vs. 10 & 11 summarize what Peter has been saying. Look with me.

II Peter 1

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

2 things will happen if you are diligent as a Christian.

This should be our goal in life once we are saved, with the Word as your source and the Holy Spirit as your empowerment.

1. Ye shall never fall...

I didn't say that. It is Bible.

Does it mean that I won't lose my salvation? No that is a given if you know anything about the promises of God. If you have a question about your salvation then you need to see me after class, or Pastor, or Assistant pastor Brother Louis.

This is talking about falling into sin.
This means to stumble or get away from God.
This means to make a mess out of your life.

How many preachers have you heard of that has fallen and is now out of the ministry.
How many lay people have you heard of that stumble.

Here is a promise that you can take to the bank.

God's Word says that if you are diligent with your Bible and prayer then "then you will never fall."

Notice here something else.

2. an abundant entrance.

Vs. 11 an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

This is a nautical picture.

This is the picture of a harbor into which ships that have been on a long journey are sailing for their final destination.

This text says that there are 2 ways to come into the harbor.

1. You can come in abundantly.
2. You can just barely make it in.

Here is a ship that has been out on the sea. It has been carelessly rigged, poorly manned, and badly commanded. It reaches the harbor and it's cargo is all gone, as it lost it in the storms. Its mast and sails are blown down as it just barely putters in. The only thing there is the bare thread bone ship itself.

That is the way many folks will get to heaven. Barely there. Saved from hell. No development in their Christian life, but they just slide in by the skin of their teeth.

There is another way to come in according to the Bible. You can come in abundantly. Cargo is safe. The sails and the mast are high. The captain is in position. The ship is ship shape, tip top, all soldiers on deck in formation, dress right dress. Uniforms spotless.

It is a picture of absolute perfection coming into harbor.

What makes the difference? Diligence

How diligent are you, when it comes to godliness?

Are you a floater?

Just float along and take in what comes.

Are you developing a diligent, disciplined, holy life?
In closing I'll read this;

We are not here to dream, to drift.
There is hard work to do, and loads to lift.
Shun not the struggle; face it, Tis God's gift.
Be strong.
It matters not how deep entrenched the wrong,
How hard the battle goes, the day how long.
Faint not, fight on, tomorrow comes the song.

It's easy to give up and quit.
The song comes to those who never give up as they develop God's word in their life.