

# The Promise of Eternal Life

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In 1513 Juan Ponce de Leon sailed from Puerto Rico in search of the mythical “fountain of youth” and discovered (that is, from the point of view of European monarchs and conquerors) the land he named Florida. Eight years later (1521), he died from arrow wounds he received in a skirmish with Seminole Indians. De Leon’s pursuit of the fountain of youth is very comparable to modern “Christianity’s” ideas of how to gain eternal life.

Paul wrote,

“But you, O man of God, flee these things [love of money, departing from the faith, many sorrows] and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith, *lay hold on eternal life*, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses... Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, *that they may lay hold on eternal life.*” (1 Tim. 6:10-12, 17-19 - emphasis added)

There is perhaps no more dangerously deceptive “doctrine” and “theology” than is the promise of eternal life. Whether stated as “once saved, always saved,” “eternal security” or “the finished work of Christ on the cross” (each of which touch upon various elements of the most vital of all truths), each of these extremely popular perversions of the gospel cause the follower to turn away from the *responsibilities* that God has placed upon us, in many cases with the result that many actually depart from the faith.

Jesus said,

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.” (Jn. 10:27-28)

Here Christ’s promise of eternal life is enunciated in one of its clearest expressions – eternal life is securely given to those who *hear His voice and follow Him*. Eternal life is not promised to those who only know the fact that Christ made such a promise. People whose lives are dominated by demonic spirits, sin and/or deceptions know this fact but they have no basis upon which they can lay hold on eternal life. They are dying, if not already dead, from wounds they have received from the fiery arrows of the evil spirits they failed to arm themselves against. (Eph. 6:11-15)

Jesus also said,

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness [on a pole – Num. 21:9], even so must the Son of Man be lifted up [on a cross], that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to

condemn the world [it will condemn itself!], but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.” (Jn. 3:14-21)

Here indeed we have another clear enunciation of Christ’s promise of eternal life: “whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (vv. 15-16) On the basis of this statement (and on the absence of “repentance,” Greek, *metanoia* [3340], from John’s writings) some “theologians” and Bible “scholars,” operating under deceptions and delusions pressed upon them by the demonic, have concocted the “doctrine” of “faith alone.” All you need to do is believe, these say, and you will have eternal life. But Jesus says here that one’s belief or refusal to believe is inextricably linked to the question of condemnation, a question resolved only by whether one’s *deeds* are light and goodness or darkness and evil. (vv. 19-21) The truly Biblical formula is: “Believe and obey.” This is the truth of the gospel and any other way is merely a counterfeit that does not lead to eternal life. One may live an enjoyable life, discovering “new lands” and still die of wounds incurred from the enemy of our souls in a short few years.

The doctrine of “eternal security” is not dangerously deceptive because it is a bald-faced lie with no truth in it whatsoever. Rather, it is dangerously deceptive because it is a failure to rightly divide the word of truth through the aid and work of Christ’s Spirit of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15, Jn. 16:13) It is taking of a spiritual truth and mangling and mashing and reshaping it with carnal hands. It is eating of the tree of (the independent from God) knowledge of good and evil while deluding oneself that one has indeed eaten from the tree of life. (see Gen. 3:22) It is a replacing of having a Savior who personally gives eternal life to those who interact with *Him* with a mere fact or idea that one can “know” with impunity, indifference and even ignorance and still reap all the benefits that attend knowing and interacting with the Savior. That is, it replaces *Him* with an *it*. This *is* the primary and overall strategy of Satan and the demonic against believers – to lure them into complexities that deliver them into a form of godliness that is void of God’s presence and power. (2 Cor. 11:3-4, 2 Tim. 3:5)

Further evidence of the true nature of the deceptive doctrines of “eternal security” is found in the responses commonly given to those who don’t agree with these deceptions. Let anyone dare to disagree with these “sacred,” cherished deceptions and the spirit that dominates the person ensnared in these “doctrines” will quickly manifest with rudeness, insults, bitter sarcasm and layers of twisted understandings of various Scriptures, all of which will be excused as merely obeying the various verses regarding divisive “brothers” (Rom. 16:17, 1 Cor. 5:11, Tit. 3:10, etc.) even though these people would never dream of nor consider using those verses against anyone who is in agreement with their pet doctrines. This willingness, even eagerness, by which eternal security proponents will divide from other believers who disagree with them is, alone, ample evidence of the tainted, demonic roots of these doctrines.

It is not to be missed that many proponents of these skewed doctrines can practice their favorite sins and need *never* overcome or forsake them. They can be dominated by arrogance and exude an intimidating, oppressive spirit but these are oh so certain that they were saved long

ago at the cross of Christ. They can spin forth their twisted misrepresentations of gospel truths faster than anyone can unravel them – thus ensuring that no one can bring forth the rightly-divided simplicity that is in Christ – all while they steadfastly believe they have equitably “settled” everything long ago with Christ and God. They can oppress, slander, malign and even drive off those who disagree with their pet doctrines or those who won’t submit to their position as “leader” and then believe they have done God a service – even though many who have been subjected to this sort of thing turn away from God entirely. The judgment of such as these is not sleeping (2 Pet. 2:3) but they do present a serious hurdle for the young but sincere disciple of Christ to overcome. (see Mt. 24:4, Eph. 5:6, etc.)

It is not a question of *what* we know – it is a question of *whom* we know. Our intellects can read the Bible and walk away with the fact that it is speaking about eternal life. That is no great intellectual feat – any reader of average intelligence can accomplish this! But until we encounter Him who is the Giver of Life, these facts will remain boring, dull, stale and lifeless, mere knowledge that causes us to think more highly of ourselves than we ought. (1 Cor. 8:1-2) It is as we *hear and follow* Him that He will give us eternal life and hold us securely. But if we will hear only our own carnal intellect (see Rom. 8:6-8), only our favorite ear-scratching spiritual guru (2 Tim. 4:3-4) or only our pet demonic “doctrines” or “theology” (1 Cor. 10:12) and we persist in drifting away and neglecting the salvation Christ offers us (see Heb. 2:1-3) and we remove ourselves from the protections He places upon those who obey Him (Gal. 5:7-9, Lk. 13:5, Heb. 5:9, etc.), we are no different from the explorer of Florida in search of the fountain of youth. We are pursuing a mythical fantasy even as we turn our backs on Christ’s very real promise of eternal life for those who will hear and follow *Him*.

Christ’s promise of eternal life still stands – as surely as “the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and ‘Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from all unrighteousness (Greek, *adikia* [93])’” (2 Tim. 2:19) “For we must *all* appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that *each one* may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has *done*, whether good or bad.” (2 Cor. 5:10 – emphasis added) “*Strive* to enter through the narrow gate, for *many*, I [Jesus] say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of unrighteousness (Greek, *adikia* [93]).’” (Lk. 13:24-27)

God has always intended that mankind should seek Him, “in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him [because] He is not far from each one of us.” (Acts 17:27) His new covenant is structured so that *He* will put His laws in our mind and write them in our hearts and in this way He will truly be our God and we shall be His people. (Heb. 8:10) But two thousand years of the traditions of men (Mt. 15:3), of stealthily introduced divisions (“heresies” – Greek, *hairesis* [139], “sect” or “party,” *denomination!*) that destroy the unity and harmony of Christ’s body (2 Pet. 2:1) and of the doctrines of demons (1 Tim. 4:1), have deposited a deep layer of filth over the deep, inner workings of God in our heart. And the more we have learned spiritual things from carnal men and submitted ourselves to the prostitute institutional “church” that imitates and usurps the place and role of the bride of Christ (Eph. 5:30, Rev. 17:6), the greater will be the filthiness of the flesh and spirit from which we must cleanse ourselves. (2 Cor. 7:1) This process requires time, patience and endurance – and time grows short in which those who

will be of His bride must prepare themselves by doing the righteous acts He prepared for us to do. (Rev. 19:7-8, Eph. 2:10)

Hearing Christ's voice and following Him is not some special privilege reserved for some select, elite "super-saints." It is not something too difficult or impossible to incorporate into our life. It is the primary *requirement* we **all** must satisfy so that we are those who do receive Christ's eternal life. "My sheep hear My voice..." If we do not hear His voice, what right do we have to think of ourselves as His sheep? "...and they follow *Me*." If our "guiding light" is merely our own intellect and carnal understanding, what is right in our own eyes (what the New Testament calls lawlessness, Greek, *anomia* [458] – Mt. 7:23, etc, also see Jdgs. 21:25), of what use is it to call Christ our Lord? (Lk. 6:46) If Christ is not Lord **of** all that we are, have and do, then He is neither our Lord nor our Savior – simply put, He is not our Lord **at** all. We can cram in as many spiritual facts as our carnality can cling to but this will not change the spiritual truth that only those who *do* the will of the Father will enter and remain in the kingdom of God (Mt. 7:21) while "*outside* are the dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie" (Rev. 22:15), even and perhaps especially that polyglot of lies called "church"! We can spend our lives exploring "new lands" in pursuit of myths and fables and end up just as dead as when we first began. Or we can humble ourselves and quiet ourselves and sit ourselves at the Master's feet and say, "Speak, Lord, Your servant is finally listening." The choice – and the consequences of our choice – belongs to us alone.

Let he who has ears hear.

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