**Three Soul-Salvation Scriptural Passages**

**By Charles Strong of** [Bible One](http://www.bibleone.net/)

Excerpts from [Three Soul-Salvation Scriptural Passages by Charles Strong of Bible One](http://bibleone.net/print_tbs140.html)

**(**[**Galatians 5:19-21**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.19-21&t=NKJV)**;** [**6:7-8**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+6.7-8&t=NKJV)**;** [**James 5:19-20**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+5.19-20&t=NKJV)**)**

This study will briefly address three passages of Scripture that are misunderstood and misapplied by both Arminians and Calvinists when it comes to salvation. In fact, most often they are misconstrued to refer to “spirit salvation,” when they actually refer to “*soul salvation*.”

[**Galatians 5:19-21**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.19-21&t=NKJV)

*Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

There is little doubt that the apostle Paul is writing to true believers. This is evident from his salutation comments and various other remarks regarding those to whom this epistle is addressed. He repeatedly refers to them as “*brethren*” ([Galatians 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+1.11&t=NKJV); [3:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.15&t=NKJV); [4:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.12&t=NKJV), [28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.28&t=NKJV); [5:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.11&t=NKJV), [13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.13&t=NKJV); [6:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+6.1&t=NKJV), [18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+6.18&t=NKJV)) and “*my little children*” ([Galatians 4:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.19&t=NKJV)); they had begun their Christian life “*in the Spirit*” ([Galatians 3:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.3&t=NKJV)); they “*are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus*” ([Galatians 3:26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.26&t=NKJV); [4:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.6&t=NKJV)); they have “*known God*” and “*are known by God*” ([Galatians 4:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.9&t=NKJV)); they, like Isaac, are “*children of promise*” ([Galatians 4:28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.28&t=NKJV)); and they have been *made free* by Christ ([Galatians 5:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.1&t=NKJV)). They *are* true believers.

Yet the warning here addressed to them is that if they practice the works of the flesh they *will not inherit the kingdom of God*. Of course the Arminian submits that the Christian can resort to such sin, but by doing so will lose salvation. On the other hand the Calvinist is at a loss as to how to explain that this warning can be directed to true believers, since it goes without saying that all true believers will not *practice* such works of the flesh. To the contrary, they hold that a true believer will persevere in good conduct. All then that is left for the Calvinist is to resort to ~~exegetical~~ eisegetical\* (see [Logos!](https://www.koffeekupkandor.com/gods-word-one.php#Logos!) in this site) gymnastics over the phrase “practice such things.” They maintain that Paul is essentially indicating that true believers, even though they may temporarily indulge in such sin, will never be able to “practice” it; otherwise, it would only indicate that such a “professing Christian” never truly believed in Christ in the first place.

The reality is that Paul is speaking to true believers who have been influenced by others to turn away from the “*grace of Christ*” and to a perverted\* concept of it ([Galatians 1:6-7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+1.6-7&t=NKJV)). They were in danger of drifting back into the bondage of the law and its works ([Galatians 2:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+2.4&t=NKJV); [3:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+3.2&t=NKJV); [4:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.9&t=NKJV)). They were going back to the old covenant given at Mount Sinai, a type of the bondwoman Hagar giving birth to Ishmael ([Galatians 4:21-25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+4.21-25&t=NKJV)). And drifting back to the bondage of the law, the Galatian Christians were being controlled not by the Spirit of God under the rule of *liberty*, but by their carnal nature (“*flesh*”). This then was seriously affecting their spiritual walk before God; or, to state it in context with this study, seriously affecting their “*soul* salvation.”

Paul then, after making it clear that the gospel of grace liberates from bondage that comes from the law, admonishes the Galatian believers to “*Walk in the Spirit and . . . not fulfill the lust of the flesh* ([Galatians 5:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.16&t=NKJV)) because, as the subject passage above indicates, only sin comes from the carnal state and true believers that practice such “*will not inherit the kingdom of God*” ([Galatians 5:19-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.19-21&t=NKJV)).

To “*inherit the kingdom of God*” is not the equivalent of “*entering heaven*,” and the kingdom of God is *not* another name for “*heaven*;” rather, it is the kingdom that Christ will establish *on earth* when He returns in clouds of glory at the end of the Tribulation Period as seen in [Revelation 19:11-20:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+19.11-20.4&t=NKJV). It is the Kingdom Age of 1000 years duration in which those believers who have *persevered in suffering* with Christ become *joint-heirs* with Christ ([Romans 8:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+8.17&t=NKJV)).

But those who have returned to the carnal state (“*fallen from grace*”—[Galatians 5:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.4&t=NKJV)) to live apart from God’s Spirit in the practice of works of the flesh ([Galatians 5:19-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.19-21&t=NKJV)), to include those who have fallen away to such a degree that turning back becomes impossible ([Hebrews 6:4-6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+6.4-6&t=NKJV)), there awaits for them only the fearful “*expectation of judgment and fiery indignation*” from their Lord at His Judgment Seat ([John 15:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+15.6&t=NKJV); [Romans 2:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+2.6&t=NKJV); [14:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+14.10&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 5:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+5.10&t=NKJV); [Galatians 6:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+6.7&t=NKJV); [Colossians 3:25](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+3.25&t=NKJV); [Hebrews 10:26-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+10.26-27&t=NKJV)), which will result in shame ([1 John 2:28](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+2.28&t=NKJV)), a non-issuance of rewards ([1 Corinthians 3:12-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.12-15&t=NKJV)), and discipline that will extend throughout the Kingdom Age ([1 Corinthians 6:9-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+6.9-10&t=NKJV); [Galatians 5:19-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+5.19-21&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 5:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+5.5&t=NKJV)).

It is only after the Kingdom Age that such carnal-state believers will find relief from the negative results of their life that will have brought such limitations upon them during that time. It is only after the Kingdom Age that “*God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away*” ([Revelation 21:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+21.4&t=NKJV)).

[**Galatians 6:7-8**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+6.7-8&t=NKJV)

*Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.*

The Arminian has a field day with this verse by committing the illegitimate totality transfer error of equating the words “*everlasting life*” in this passage with entrance into heaven and escaping the lake of fire (commonly termed as “hell”). On the other hand, the Calvinist has a more difficult time in explaining this verse in conjunction with the doctrine of “eternal security of the believer;” save to say, that a true believer cannot persistently “sow to the flesh” and thereby “reap corruption.”

The truth may be understood when one understands that the Greek words *zoen aionion*, which are translated “eternal life” and “everlasting life,” depending on the English translation used and the context surrounding the words, may refer to one or the other aspect of God’s salvation. This is amply explained by Joseph C. Dillow in chapter seven of his masterful work entitled The Reign of the Servant Kings (Schoettle Publishing Company, 1992). And so as not to “reinvent the wheel,” his account is produced for the reader’s consideration and it follows:

Inheriting Eternal Life

The positive side of our great salvation is eternal life. By this, of course, our Lord did not mean merely eternal existence but a rich and meaningful life which begins now and extends into eternity.

Given Freely as a Gift

All readers of the New Testament are familiar with the tremendous gospel promise of the free gift of eternal life. That this rich experience was obtained by faith alone was one of the key insights of the Reformation:

*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life* [***zoen aionion***] ([John 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+3.16&t=NKJV))

*I tell you the truth, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life* [***zoen aionion***] *and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life* ([John 5:24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+5.24&t=NKJV)).

*For My Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life* [***zoen aionion***], *and I will raise him up at the last day* ([John 6:40](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+6.40&t=NKJV)).

Eternal life can be ours, now, on the condition that we believe in Him, and for no other condition. Yes, eternal life is ours on the basis of faith alone.

Earned as a Reward

The phrase “eternal life” (***zoen aionion***) occurs forty-two times in the New Testament. Its common meaning of the free gift of regeneration (entrance into heaven on the basis of faith alone) is well documented. However, many are not aware that in eleven of those forty-two usages (26 percent), eternal life is presented to the believer as something to be earned or worked for! For example:

*To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, He will give eternal life* [***zoen aionion***] ([Romans 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+2.7&t=NKJV)).

*The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life* [***zoen aionion***] ([Galatians 6:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+6.8&t=NKJV)).

*The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life* [***zoen aionion***]. *Whoever serves Me must follow Me; and where I am My servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves Me* ([John 12:25-26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+12.25-26&t=NKJV)).

*And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for My sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life* [***zoen aionion***] ([Matthew. 19:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Matthew.+19.29&t=NKJV)).

Just as there are two kinds of inheritance, two dimensions to salvation, there seem to be two sides to eternal life. We must remember that eternal life in the Bible is not a static entity, a mere gift of regeneration that does not continue to grow and blossom. No, it is a dynamic relationship with Christ Himself. Jesus taught us that when He said:

*Now this is eternal life* [***zoen aionion***]: *that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent* ([John 17:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+17.3&t=NKJV)).

He explained elsewhere that this life was intended to grow and become more abundant*: “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”* ([John 10:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+10.10&t=NKJV)). *But growth is not automatic; it is conditioned upon our responses. Only by the exercise of spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, obedience, faith, study of the Scriptures, and proper responses to trials, does our intimacy with Christ increase. Only by continuing in doing good does that spiritual life imparted as regeneration grow to maturity and earn a reward.*

*This is what the apostle Paul referred to when he challenged Timothy to “take hold of eternal life”:*

*Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life* [***zoen aionion***] *to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses* ([1 Timothy 6:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.12&t=NKJV)).

Possessing eternal life is one thing, but *“taking hold”* of it is another. The former is static; the latter is dynamic. The former depends upon God; the latter depends upon us. The former comes through faith alone; *“taking hold”* requires faith plus obedience ([1 Timothy 6:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.14&t=NKJV)). Those who are rich in this world and who give generously “*will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life”* ([1 Timothy 6:19](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.19&t=NKJV)). Eternal life is not only the gift of regeneration but *“true life”* which is cultivated by faith and acts of obedience.

This should not surprise us. On page after page of the Bible the richness of our spiritual life is conditioned upon our spiritual obedience . . . . It is extremely important to note that in every place where eternal life is presented as something which can be obtained by works; it is contextually **always** described as a future acquisition. Conversely, whenever eternal life is described as something in the present, it is obtained by faith alone.

In [Galatians 6:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+6.8&t=NKJV), for example, eternal life is something earned by the sower. If this passage is speaking of final salvation from hell, then salvation is based on works. A man reaps what he sows. If we sow to please the Spirit, we will reap (future tense) eternal life. Paul calls it a harvest *“if we do not give up.”*  Eternal life is earned by sowing to the Spirit and persevering to the end. It is what we get if we do good works. There is nothing here about the inevitability of this reaping. It depends upon us. We will reap, Paul says, *“if we do not give up.”* Eternal life is no static entity but a relationship with God. It is dynamic and growing and has degrees. Some Christians have a more intimate relationship with their Lord than others. They have a richer experience of eternal life. Jesus Himself said, *“I came to give life more abundantly”* ([John 10:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+10.10&t=NKJV)).

In this sense it is parallel to physical life. Physical life is received as a gift, but then it must be developed. Children often develop to their full physical and mental ability under the auspices of their parents. In order for eternal life to flourish, we must also be obedient to our Parent. Whenever eternal life is viewed as a reward in the New Testament, it is presented as something to be acquired in the future. But when it is presented as a gift, it is something acquired in the present. No one can receive it as a reward, *i.e., experience it to a more abundant degree, until he has received eternal life freely as a gift to begin with.*

[Bible One - Chapter 7—Inheriting Eternal Life, The Reign of the Servant Kings](http://www.bibleone.net/RSK7.html)

This commentator can add nothing to the above regarding [Galatians 6:7-8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Galatians+6.7-8&t=NKJV) other than the note following this paragraph and to reinforce to the reader that care must always be taken to understand any particular phrase or type within its context, both within the entire epistle and within its immediate perspective. The Bible is essentially a whole, a combination of 66 books by approximately 40 different human authors (all of course used by the Holy Spirit) and written over a span of thousands of years, but with *one integrated message* of Jesus Christ and God’s plan and purpose for mankind. It does *not* contradict itself; it is *man* and his *unwillingness* to “rightly divide” its truth that produces chaos out of order.

[NOTE: “*Eternal life*” and its equivalent “*everlasting life*,” are phrases used in Scripture to distinguish life after *physical* death—separation of the body and the spirit/soul—*as opposed to temporal life prior to physical death*. Additionally, it often carries with it the quality of “*abundance of life*” as mentioned by Christ in [John 10:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=John+10.10&t=NKJV). Depending upon context, it may refer to *either* “spirit salvation” for all eternity or “*soul* salvation” *during the Millennial Kingdom*. A comprehensive treatment of this matter may be acquired from the following two works: The Reign of the Servant Kings, by Joseph C. Dillow and [Bible One - Gary Whipple's Beyond the Rapture](http://www.bibleone.net/BeyondtheRapture.pdf).]

[**James 5:19-20**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+5.19-20&t=NKJV)

*Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.*

Just as it can clearly be seen that the phrase “kingdom of God” does not equate to heaven and the Greek word *psuche*, which is normally translated “*soul*,” actually should be translated “life;” it should also be clearly understood that the word “death” may have different meanings depending on the context in which it is used.

And just as the above Galatians’ passages are addressed to true believers, so is this passage in James. But more significantly, the one who “*wanders from the truth*” is also a true believer. It is therefore immediately clear that a believer can “*wander from the truth*,” can become involved in “*error*,” and commit a “*multitude of sins*.”

But this should not be strange to the student of God’s Word. Over and over again by clear doctrinal presentation and by anecdotal example; the Bible forcefully teaches that Christian—true believers—can fall by the wayside, can revert to their carnal state, and can commit egregious sin. In fact, “*If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us*” ([1 John 1:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+1.10&t=NKJV)).

The apostle Paul throughout the New Testament constantly admonished believers who were still babies in Christ, who lived in their carnal state, and who were in danger of falling away from the grace that is within Christ (see [Romans 6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+6&t=NKJV); [12:1-2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+12.1-2&t=NKJV); [13:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+13.14&t=NKJV); [14:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+14.1&t=NKJV); [15:1](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+15.1&t=NKJV); [16:17-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Romans+16.17-18&t=NKJV); [1 Corinthians 1:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+1.11&t=NKJV); [3:1-3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+3.1-3&t=NKJV); [4:14-21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+4.14-21&t=NKJV); [5:1-13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+5.1-13&t=NKJV); [6:1-10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+6.1-10&t=NKJV); [2 Corinthians 6:11-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+6.11-18&t=NKJV); Galatians-entire book; [Colossians 3:1-17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Colossians+3.1-17&t=NKJV); [2 Thessalonians 3:6-15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Thessalonians+3.6-15&t=NKJV); [1 Timothy 4:1-5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+4.1-5&t=NKJV); [6:3-16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Timothy+6.3-16&t=NKJV); [2 Timothy 2:14-26](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+2.14-26&t=NKJV); [3:1-9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Timothy+3.1-9&t=NKJV); Hebrews-entire book). One cannot read the New Testament without concluding that true believers are constantly subject to the deceit of Satan and if not suitably attired with the armor of God ([Ephesians 6:10-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+6.10-18&t=NKJV)) can fall back into sin. This was the fear of the apostle Paul when in [1 Corinthians 9:24-27](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+9.24-27&t=NKJV) he said:

*Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

Paul’s fear was not that he would lose his eternal salvation (deliverance from hell); he knew that was a “free gift” paid for by Christ on the cross. To this he *believed* and was therefore sealed for all eternity by the Spirit of God ([2 Corinthians 1:22](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Corinthians+1.22&t=NKJV); [Ephesians 1:13-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+1.13-14&t=NKJV); [4:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+4.30&t=NKJV)). But on the other hand he knew that he, as all Christians, was engaged in *a race* for the reward that would come at the Judgment Seat of Christ and would extend *throughout the Kingdom Age*. With this in mind he feared he might become “disqualified,” and therefore disciplined his body into subjection in order to properly fight against evil.

He was also aware, as all Christians should be, that it is entirely possible to “fall away” (become *apostate*) in one degree or another. There are ample examples of this in both the Old and New Testaments. Two of the most notable are David when he lied, committed adultery, and murdered; and Peter when he rejected Christ three times, even cursing the third time. If the truth be told, every Christian experiences varying degrees of *apostasy* or “falling away” from Christ throughout his or her life—some a little, but many to a grave degree. To this end, and this is the subject of the referenced scriptural passage in James, it is the obligation of every Christian to assist in turning a wandering believer back from the error of his way (departure from the truth) in order to save a life (soul) and cover a multitude of sins.

In this regard, Joseph C. Dillow in chapters nine and ten of The Reign of the Servant Kings has the following cogent remarks applicable to [James 5:19-20](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+5.19-20&t=NKJV), as follow:

Just as it is possible to *“save”* one in whom the Word has been implanted ([James 1:21](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=James+1.21&t=NKJV)), it is also sometimes necessary to *“save”* one who is of the *“brethren”* and is *“among us.”* A man who is already saved in the sense of final deliverance from hell needs only to be saved from death. The death here may be the *“sin unto death”* referred to in [1 Corinthians 11:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+11.30&t=NKJV) and [1 John 5:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1John+5.16&t=NKJV). Certainly this is the ultimate consequence of Divine discipline brought upon the sinning Christian. But short of that, the life of the sinning Christian can only be characterized as spiritually dead.

We conclude that the word “saved” in James does not refer to final deliverance form hell. It refers, instead, to deliverance from the terrible consequences of spiritual impoverishment and ultimately physical death, which can come upon the regenerate person if he fails to vitalize his faith with a life of works. Divine discipline is certain, but loss of salvation is not under consideration.

James is well within the theology of the Old Testament when he warns against the shortening of life which occurs when a man lives a life of debauchery or bitterness or sin. Indeed, his point has been commonly observed by mankind throughout the ages and confirmed by modern medical science. Most of our ailments have psychosomatic origins. Emotional stress brought on by a life of guilt and bitterness is, perhaps, the major cause of physical death in the Western world. . . .

The *“sinner”* to which James refers is evidently a Christian brother. The conditional clause implies that it is by no means inevitable that he will always be turned back. Like wise, the apostle Peter makes it clear that true Christians can *“fall”:*

*Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* ([2 Peter 1:10-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=2Peter+1.10-11&t=NKJV)).

[Bible One - Charles Strong's Review of The Reign of the Servant Kings](http://www.bibleone.net/RSK.html)

Not much can be added to this insightful observation of the referenced passage. Though it must be reiterated that due to apostasy (falling away); Christians are subject to discipline ([Hebrews 12:7-11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Hebrews+12.7-11&t=NKJV)), and to sickness, and at times early physical death ([1 Corinthians 11:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+11.30&t=NKJV)).

**Conclusion**

A fair hearing of the above three passages of scripture will conclude that they are referring to a Christian’s “soul salvation;” not to “spirit salvation.” The subject that a believer’s conduct as a “child of God” will have present and future consequences is never a popular theme. Most of today’s “church-going Christians” appear to ignore this *meat doctrine* of God’s Word. They prefer to stay with the milk of the Word, which soothes them regarding their “spirit salvation.” But they have no stomach for the *meat-doctrine of the coming Judgment Seat of Christ and its consequences that extend throughout the Kingdom Age.*

And, unfortunately, most ministers of God’s Word do little to teach otherwise! They would rather prioritize most of the church’s time toward the preaching of psychological uplifting homilies, the teaching of denominational themes, and non-intrusive programs instead of hard-study in God’s Word. This will eventually be to their shame as they soon will stand before their Savior at His Judgment Seat and as they answer for the “babes in Christ” who never matured in Bible doctrine that were under their charge.

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[Three Soul-Salvation Scriptural Passages by Charles Strong of Bible One](http://bibleone.net/print_tbs140.html)