



“Once in Grace, Always in Grace” Is This Scriptural?

An In-depth Examination of this Much-discussed and Controversial Subject in the Light of the Scriptures.

"My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2: 4, 5). "If they speak not according to this word [the Scriptures], it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8: 20).

ONE of Satan's great errors, with which he has deceived many Christians and lulled them into complacent sleep, is his teaching that those who once have come into God's grace, or favor, as disciples of Christ, are there to stay, and that there is absolutely no danger of their ever falling fully away from it. Many rest themselves very securely upon this fallacy, that if they have once become recipients of this Divine grace, it means that they will be in this grace perpetually, to all eternity, and that they have salvation unto eternal life in heaven, despite anything that they may do or leave undone after receiving this grace.

Satan has popularized this deception with the catchy slogan so often heard from various pulpits and among Christian people: "Once in grace, always in grace." (It is frequently referred to also as "eternal security.") It seems strange that many Christians accept and hold to this cliché as though it were really the truth of God's Word, whereas there is nothing in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation that really supports such an idea. Rather, the united testimony of Scripture, reason and facts is to the contrary. The false idea "once in grace, always in grace" is an outgrowth of erroneous views of election and predestination (see BS No. 343—a copy free on request). Like most errors, Satan's "eternal security" deception is supported by misapplications of some Scriptures, chief of which are the following:

(1) John 5: 24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

(2) John 6: 44: "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day [the Millennial Day, in which the resurrection takes place]."

(3) 1 Pet. 1: 23: "Being born [begotten] again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

(4) 1 John 3: 9: "Whosoever is born [begotten] of God doth not [wilfully] commit sin; for his seed [the holy seed of the Truth, the Spirit of the Truth] remaineth in him: and he [the new creature, begotten of God] cannot [willfully] sin, because he is born [begotten] of God [for the old will to triumph over the new will, would signify the death of the new creature, the quenching of the Spirit]."

(5) 1 John 5: 18: "We know that whosoever is born [begotten] of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God [the Greek word *gennao* means *to beget*, when associated with a male as the active agent (as in this verse), and *to bear* when associated with a female as the active agent (see *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, p. 278)] keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not [does not lay hold of him]."

The above texts are supposed to teach that when we become Christian disciples we get from God an atom of Himself, the seed of the new being; and this seed is presumed to be undiminshable and indestructible. It is claimed that although this *seed* may lie dormant for a while, or be hindered from development by a backsliding, sinful course of life, it will ultimately and surely develop into a true and noble spirit being, to have eternal life in heaven.

But these texts do not so teach. They do not teach that the new nature begotten by the holy *seed*, the *Truth*, cannot die out from the individual, that the Christian cannot fall from grace. The contrary is the suggestion and lesson of the figure used—natural begetting. It shows us the possibility of misconception, miscarriage, stillbirth, *etc.*, after spiritual begetting, as sometimes occurs after natural begetting. Thus the figure used contradicts the false theory of "once in grace, always in grace."

These five Scriptures teach in harmony with the other Scriptures—for God's Word is always harmonious with itself. In James 1: 18 we read: "Of his [God's] own will begat he us [the prospective members of the Church, the Body of Christ] with *the word of truth*, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." It was by *hearing, believing* and *responding by consecration to the word of truth* about Christ and becoming His disciples that these individuals received "everlasting life" (in its incipient sense) and "passed from death [in Adam] unto [the Spirit-begotten] life [in Christ]" (John 5: 24). But this Spirit-begotten life is life only in an incipient sense, and is far from the Spirit-born life, which does not come until in the resurrection (at the last day" (John 6: 44). The Spirit-begettal was "unto a lively *hope*" (not yet an actuality—Rom. 8: 24, 25), which is only the first step, the incipient step, in the bringing forth of a new creature fitted for "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you [the Spirit-begotten ones who continue faithful in consecration unto death]" (1 Pet. 1: 3, 4).

SEVEN STEPS IN DEVELOPING A NEW CREATION

As there are seven processes as parts of the generation of a human being—begetting, quickening, growth, strengthening, balancing, perfecting and birth—so the Bible teaches every one of them in the complete generation of the new creation. The following will prove this: (1) The begettal occurred through depositing the Word as the germinating seed (James 1: 18; 1 Pet. 1: 3, 23; John 1: 12, 13; 3: 3; 1 Cor. 4: 15; Philemon 10; 1 John 5: 1); this begettal made the prospective Body members embryo new creatures (2 Cor. 5: 17; Gal. 6: 15). (2) Later, each one of them was quickened as an embryo (John 6: 63; Eph. 2: 1, 5; Col. 2: 13; 1 Tim. 6: 13). (3) Also, they began to grow in grace, knowledge and service in their embryo condition (Eph. 4: 15; 1 Pet. 2: 2; 2 Pet. 3: 18). (4) The strengthening of these embryos in every good word and work also set

in (Eph. 3: 16; 6: 10-17; Col. 1: 11; 2 Tim. 2: 1; 1 Pet. 5: 10). (5) The new creatures developed more as embryos by balancing the various parts of a Christlike character with one another (1 Thes. 3: 12, 13; 2 Thes. 2: 17; 3: 3; James 5: 8; 1 Pet. 5: 10; 2 Pet. 1: 12). (6) Their full development as embryos was completed by perfecting their characters in Christlikeness, which completely conformed them to Christ's image (Rom. 8: 29; Luke 6: 40; Eph. 4: 12; Heb. 13: 20, 21; 1 Pet. 5: 10). This made them as embryo new creatures ready for the Spirit birth (7), which they experienced by participating in the First Resurrection, and by which they obtained the Divine nature and immortality and can come and go as the wind—invisibly; "so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3: 5-8; Col. 1: 18; Rev. 1: 5; 1 Cor. 15: 20, 23, 50-54; James 1: 18; 2 Pet. 1: 4).

These seven processes, beginning with the begetting of the Spirit and ending with the birth of the Spirit, constitute the acts whereby a new order of beings is brought forth by God, and that on the Divine, the highest, plane of existence; and these processes correspond to the seven steps in the generation of a human being.

We see from the above that the Truth-seed, "the word of truth" (James 1: 18), by which the person is begotten of the Spirit, is of itself incorruptible and "liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pet. 1: 23; Matt. 24: 35); therefore the New Creature in the sense of the *holy powers* begotten and the *holy qualities* produced in the person who is begotten of the Spirit "cannot sin" (Gal. 6: 15; compare with Gal. 5: 6, which by the expression "faith which worketh by love" proves that the term "new creature" in Gal. 6: 15 means the holy powers begotten and the holy qualities developed in the person who is begotten of the Spirit). These holy powers and qualities "cannot sin, because he is begotten of God" (1 John 3: 9). God's holy Spirit in the person thus begotten to a new life, cannot sin, but it can be "quenched," or extinguished, if the old mind and will, *reckoned* dead, is allowed to come back to life and into control (1 Thes. 5: 19; Rom. 6: 11; 8: 6-17).

The wicked one, Satan, cannot lay hold of the New Creature, begotten of God; for the new heart, mind and will, which wills to do only God's will, cannot sin (1 John 3: 9; 5: 18). "Whatsoever is born [begotten] of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory [the conquering power] that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 John 5: 4)—the New Creature, the "faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 6: 15; 5: 6). "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whoever sinneth [willfully] hath not seen him, neither known him" (1 John 3: 6).

While the New Creature or the new heart, mind and will, God's holy Spirit in the regenerated individual, cannot sin, nevertheless sin is present in the fallen flesh. "If we say that we have no sin [no imperfection in our fallen flesh, manifesting itself in transgressions], we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins [transgressions of commission and omission], he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins [of weakness and ignorance], and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1: 8-10).

How careful the Spirit-begotten and the Spirit-enlightened ones should be to "grieve not the holy Spirit of God" (Eph. 4: 30)! "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Cor. 4: 7). Let us treasure it above all things else; "for what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8: 36).

God does not destroy the free moral agency of His children, disciples of Christ; He gives them freedom of choice; those who willfully and persistently choose to disobey Him and His righteous and holy teachings and arrangements, He will eventually annihilate in the Second Death; but those who through love and appreciation cheerfully render full allegiance, obedience and faithfulness to Him, He rewards with everlasting life.

OTHER ALLEGED PROOF TEXTS EXAMINED

Let us now consider briefly the other main texts often cited to prove the theory that a true Christian cannot ever fall fully from Divine favor:

(6) John 10: 29: "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." God protects those who by consecration become His sheep and thus place themselves fully into His care. But this does not mean that they are *imprisoned* in His care, so that they cannot go from Him as they came to Him, by the exercise of their own *free* wills. They can stray from Him and be captured by Satan and his agents (v. 12). Only he who "*dwelleth* in the secret place of the most High shall *abide* under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psa. 91: 1, 4).

(7) John 15: 16: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you." The twelve Apostles were ordained, or appointed, to a special office, and for a special purpose. The Apostle Paul, who was given the Apostolic office vacated by Judas because of his unfaithfulness (Acts 1: 20; 9: 15), speaks of his ordination, saying, "I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle" (1 Tim. 2: 7)—"not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father" (Gal. 1: 1). Similarly, our Lord chose all of His Body members "out of the world" (John 15: 19), and God "hath set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him" (1 Cor. 12: 18). They were all ordained, or appointed, to "bring forth fruit" (John 15: 16); but many, like Judas (John 17: 12; Matt. 26: 24), failed to do so; they did not abide in Him; therefore they were cut off and became withered branches, fit only for destruction (vs. 1-8); and their places were taken by others.

(8) Rom. 8: 29: "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." This merely mentions that there would be a class foreknown to and foreordained by God, who must have characters like that of Christ. Anyone, regardless of sex, race, language or national origin, who during the time of the High Calling would fulfill the conditions and become a character copy of Christ—would be accepted and given a reward among the "kings and priests" in God's Kingdom (Gal. 3: 28; Rev. 5: 9, 10).

(9) Rom. 8: 31: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" This is a wonderful assurance, but it does not guarantee that the incorruptible seed, "the word of truth," by which the one who is a new creature was begotten of the Spirit, could not be choked out by the thorns—the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, pleasure, ambition, *etc.*, which one might choose of his own volition (Matt. 13: 7, 22; Mark 4: 19; Luke 8: 14).

(10) Rom. 8: 33: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Our unintentional weaknesses are attributable to the fallen flesh, which is covered by the robe

of Christ's righteousness; we are "justified by faith" (Rom. 5: 1). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8: 1). But this does not guarantee that the individual will continue to walk after the Spirit unto the end. So the Apostle Paul exhorts: "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5: 15, 16).

(11) Rom. 8: 38, 39: "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any *other* creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." God's love for His consecrated people is so great that He will not of Himself withdraw from us any favor He ever bestows, nor will He ever cast us off or cause us to fall. And more than this, His love is so great that He will not permit others ("any *other* creature") to separate us from His favor *contrary to our own will*. And since His love is so great and His power all-mighty, we have full confidence that no power on earth or in heaven can forcibly separate us from His love and favor granted to us in and through our Redeemer (1 John 4: 4). God honors *our own volition* either to remain in His grace or to separate ourselves from it. "God is a Spirit [a spirit being, with perfect wisdom, justice, love and power]: and they that worship him must [accordingly] worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4: 24).

(12) 2 Tim. 2: 19: "The Lord knoweth them that are his." God cannot be deceived. He knows those who become His, by "being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," and by "presenting their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Rom. 3: 24; 12: 1); and He knows equally well whenever any lose the spirit of truth, love and full devotion to Him and cease "to will and to do according to his good pleasure" (Phil. 2: 13). He works in us only as we permit Him to do so.

We see, then, that none of the above Scriptures offered to support the claim of "once in grace, always in grace," really does so. It is only as these Scriptures are misunderstood and misapplied that such a deceptive and absurd conclusion can be drawn. In fact, Satan first introduced this deceptive and dangerous "eternal security" error, and then wrested and twisted the above Scriptures in an effort to support it, thus breeding other errors by so doing. Let us ever be on guard, "lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor. 2: 11).

REMAINING IN GOD'S GRACE—CONDITIONAL

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" (2 Pet. 3: 17).

IN the preceding chapter we examined Scripture texts brought forth by those who hold to the "once in grace, always in grace" theory, the "eternal security" idea, the false teaching that God's grace given to Christ's followers, having once reached them, must abide with them

unconditionally through all eternity. We found that these texts, when understood properly, in harmony with other Scriptures, do not really support their theory.

The "eternal security" adherents entirely lose sight of the true significance of numerous other Bible texts which plainly declare that all who would be permanent and everlasting beneficiaries of this grace of God must abide in Christ—that they must, as the Apostle exhorts, "Keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 21). We will now examine some of these texts:

(1) Matt. 5: 13: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." Our Lord here shows that God's faithful people may fall from grace and lose their seasoning and preservative influence upon others, and become utterly useless and fit only for destruction.

(2) Matt. 6: 23: "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" Our Lord spoke this also, not to people in general, but to His disciples; for this also was a part of His sermon on the mount (Matt. 5: 1, 2). The light in us as His consecrated followers is the Truth of God's Word and its resultant Spirit and acts. We can sin against the Spirit and can "quench" it, as the Bible indicates (1 Thes. 5: 19). This occurs when the mind gives up the Truth of God's Word, and the heart, the Spirit of the Truth. Thus the light that is in us can become darkness; error and sin can supplant truth and righteousness. After having enjoyed the light, the darkness of sin and error is greater by contrast than if one had never had the light. Better never to have begun than to end our Christian career in this manner. "Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness" (Luke 11: 35).

(3) Matt. 24: 12, 13: "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (see also Mark 13: 13). Our Lord shows here that it is possible for a Christian's love for God, Jesus, the Truth and the brethren to grow cold, and for him to fall away from God's grace, or favor, by giving up in "the good fight of faith" (1 Tim. 6: 12) and not enduring to the end.

(4) Matt. 25: 30: "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." This shows that though the individual in his consecration was a servant of God, he became unfaithful and unprofitable and lost the grace he once had—the light that was in him became darkness.

(5) Luke 9: 62: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Here our Lord shows that those who by the grace of God come to Him through Christ Jesus, consecrate their lives to Him and His service, and then look back to the things of this world, which they had renounced, and set again their affections on them, are not fit for the Kingdom.

(6) Luke 17: 32: "Remember Lot's wife." What a forceful illustration our Lord here gives of those who were once in grace, "delivered from the wrath to come" (1 Thes. 1: 10), but who, like

Lot's wife (Gen. 19: 17, 26), instead of "forgetting those things which are behind" (Phil. 3: 13), "look back," and thus prove themselves unfit for the Kingdom!

(7) John 15: 2: "Every branch in me [Spirit-begotten ones, prospective members of the Body of Christ] that beareth not fruit he [God, the great Husbandman] taketh away." V. 6 shows that any of these who do not abide in Christ are cast forth and destroyed (*i.e.*, in the Second Death). Thus Jesus here very plainly and thoroughly refutes the "eternal security" error.

(8) Rom. 14: 13: "That no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." This inspired statement would be purposeless and absurd if one who is a Christian brother, and thus in God's grace, is bound always to remain in that grace and thus would not be susceptible to falling away. It is a serious thing to stumble one of the Lord's little ones who believe in Him (Matt. 18: 6).

(9) 1 Cor. 9: 27: "I keep under my body [suppressing its efforts to control], and bring it into subjection [to God's will in all things]: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." The Apostle Paul did not believe that just because he as a New Creature in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5: 17) was once in grace he was sure to remain always in that grace. He realized that if he did not continue faithful in his consecration he would fall from God's favor and be rejected.

(10) 1 Cor. 10: 12: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Those who believe the fiction that when one is once in grace he is always in grace are apt to be complacent and not to take any heed lest they fall. Thus they are more likely to become negligent and to fall away from the Truth and its Spirit. Psa. 91: 7 shows prophetically that here in the end of the Age the faithful "little flock" would stand, while myriads would fall because of unfaithfulness.

(11) 2 Cor. 6: 1: "We then ... beseech you [the Apostle was here addressing 'saints' in 'the church of God'—1: 1] also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." If God's people do not properly appreciate, cherish and use His favor for its intended purpose, it is indeed received in vain, and is eventually withdrawn.

(12) Gal. 4: 9: "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements [of legalism], whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" How could they do this, unless it is possible to fall from grace into bondage?

(13) Gal. 5: 4: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Those who hold to the fable that those once in grace are always in grace, would of course deny that any are "fallen from grace." Many Christians today try, contrary to Rom. 3: 20; Gal. 2: 16, 21, *etc.*, to justify themselves by paying tithes, by keeping Saturday as the Christian sabbath, and by other deeds of the Jewish Law, forgetting that "by grace are ye saved through faith" (Eph. 2: 8). "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8: 4).

(14) Phil. 2: 12: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Here the Apostle exhorts his beloved brethren to "work out your own salvation [which you have received 'through faith'—probationarily, *not actually* prior to the resurrection—but 'by hope'—Rom. 8: 24; this salvation, extended to us by God's grace through faith (Eph. 2: 8), is to be *worked out*] with fear and trembling." The Apostle explains that our salvation in the Gospel is conditional—"By which also ye are saved, *if ye keep in memory [hold fast, margin] what I preached unto you*, unless ye have believed in vain" (1 Cor. 15: 1, 2). "Once in grace, always in grace" had no place in the Apostle Paul's preaching.

(15) Phil. 3: 13, 14: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." As shown in the context, the Apostle was exerting every effort that he might be found in Christ (v. 9), that he might know Him, and the power of His resurrection, the First Resurrection (v. 10) —"If by any means I might attain unto *the* resurrection of *the* dead [the First Resurrection]" (v. 11). St. Paul surely realized that the High Calling salvation offered to him was conditional upon his being faithful unto death.

(16) Col. 1: 21-23: "To present you [the saints and faithful brethren—1: 1] holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel." Note the word "if"; a condition is here indicated. It would not be a case of "once in grace, always in grace." Their final standing "before the judgment seat of Christ" (Rom. 14: 10) would be dependent on their continuing in the faith grounded and settled, and not being moved away "from the hope of the gospel."

(17) 1 Thes. 5: 19: "Quench not the Spirit." One may have the grace of God's holy Spirit both in head (illuminating his mind) and in heart (controlling his affections) and then quench (extinguish) in himself this holy Spirit, or disposition, "of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1: 7). It is not a case of "once in grace, always in grace."

(18) 1 Tim. 1: 18, 19: "War a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck." Thus some sin against the grace of God, putting it away, and making shipwreck (compare 1 Cor. 9: 27).

(19) 1 Tim. 4: 16: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Timothy might have replied: Why do you tell me that by taking heed to myself and to the doctrine I will save myself? Don't you know that I am already saved? that "he that believeth on [Greek, *eis, into*] the Son hath everlasting life," that "he that hath the Son hath life" (John 3: 36; 1 John 5: 12)? Surely you must know that "according to his mercy he [God] saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit [His holy disposition], which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Titus 3: 5, 6). But v. 7 makes the matter plain: "that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs *according to the hope of eternal life*." The "everlasting life"

already extended to Timothy "through faith" (Eph. 2: 8) was probationary; for he was "saved by hope" (Rom. 8: 24), and "hope that is seen [in its fruition] is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" You, Timothy, are to "hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1: 13), the "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time [the day of our Lord's Second Advent]" (1 Pet. 1: 3-5), the "day" of the Lord's "appearing"—when the Apostle Paul also would receive his "crown of righteousness" in the First Resurrection (2 Tim. 4: 6-8; Rev. 20: 4, 6). Like others, Timothy had to *take heed* to himself and to the doctrine (his heart and his head) *if* he would save himself unto that everlasting life already given to him conditionally and anticipatorily, but to become fixedly his if he proved himself faithful unto death (Rev. 2: 10).

(20) 1 Tim. 5: 15: "Some are already turned aside after Satan." "Once in grace, always in grace," was not true in their case.

(21) 1 Tim. 6: 12: "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called." While by God's grace eternal life has been *reckoned* to us through Christ Jesus, we must fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life fixedly if we would make it ours eternally. We have been called unto it, and by faithfulness unto death we must lay hold on it. The Spirit-begotten ones were spoken of as those who "by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality"; in "the righteous judgment of God" they are declared worthy of "eternal life" (Rom. 2: 5-7).

(22) 2 Tim. 2: 10: "I [Paul] endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." The salvation enjoyed by the elect in this life is only tentative, probationary, and it is necessary for them to fight the good fight of faith and to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ" (v. 3) if they would "obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

(23) 2 Tim. 2: 11-13: "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." Note the four conditional clauses here stated. There is no room here for the unscriptural "eternal security" dogma.

(24) 2 Tim. 4: 10: "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." Demas was once in grace, and one of Paul's fellow workers (Col. 4: 14; Philemon 24); but he fell from grace, turning back in his affections and conduct to the things of "this present evil world" (Gal. 1: 4; James 4: 4; 1 John 2: 15-17).

(25) Titus 1: 15, 16: "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience [head and heart] is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate [worthless]." How careful we should be to "maintain good works" (Titus 3: 8, 14) and not to become defiled in doctrine (through *unbelief*) or in conduct (through *disobedience*), thus becoming worthless as true servants of God!

(26) Heb. 2: 1: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away [from them]" (ARV; comp. Greek text, Diaglott, RSV, Rotherham, etc.). The words "from them" are supplied; they are not in the Greek text. One who is in grace can easily slip away, or drift away from the Truth and the Spirit of the Truth that God has so graciously given to him, if he does not give earnest heed to them (Heb. 1: 1, 2).

(27) Heb. 2: 3: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation [the High Calling salvation]; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?" The word "we" here refers to new creatures in Christ Jesus, those already in God's grace. Satan's deception, "once in grace, always in grace," is completely overthrown by this text alone.

(28) Heb. 4: 1: "Let us [who are already in God's grace] therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest [the eternal rest, or Sabbath-keeping, that remains for the people of God—v. 9], any of you should seem to come short of it." Note additionally vs. 11, 14. These verses also overthrow the "eternal security" fiction.

(29) Heb. 6: 4-6: "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift [justification by faith—Rom. 5: 15-18], and [as new creatures, by Spirit-begetting] were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, *if they shall fall away* [which would be impossible if Satan's lie, 'once in grace, always in grace,' were true], to renew them again unto repentance [unto a proper course]; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame [they would make it necessary for Him to die again for them as individual willful sinners so they could have life; but Christ 'dieth no more'—Rom. 6: 9]." Thus those who are once in grace as Spirit-begotten ones, new creatures, but "fall away" from God's grace, His favor, by willfully sinning the sin unto death, are beyond recovery. They go into "the second death"—utter, complete and eternal annihilation. (See our booklet *The Hell of the Bible*.)

(30) Heb. 6: 11, 12: "And we desire that every one of you [who are already in God's grace] do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end [they do not have that full assurance without the essential diligence in realizing the fruition of their hope] that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." This completely refutes Satan's "eternal security" error.

(31) Heb. 10: 26-29: "If we [who are new creatures] sin willfully [willfully reject God's grace after once having received it] after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins [the atonement for Adam's sin does not cover willful sins against light and knowledge], but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries ['who shall be punished with everlasting destruction'—2 Thes. 1: 9; for 'all the wicked will God destroy'—Psa. 145: 20]. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer [severer] punishment [the worse punishment is the Second Death, from which there is no resurrection], suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the

[sacrificial] covenant, wherewith he was sanctified [oh, yes, he was fully sanctified unto God, and as a new creature was in His grace! but he fell from God's grace by counting the blood of the sacrificial covenant, wherewith he was *sanctified*—thus having gone on from the first grace, that of *justification*, into the second grace, that of *sanctification*—Rom. 5: 1, 2], an unholy thing [a common, ordinary thing, not as of the sin-offering, hence a thing not pertaining to the holy things of the Altar and the Mercy Seat], and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace." How can anyone hold to Satan's error of "once in grace, always in grace," in the face of this very strong refutation of it!

(32) Heb. 10: 38: "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." A looking back leads first to a compromising of the Truth in favor of the craving of the fallen flesh, and finally to a complete surrender to the fleshly desires and a drawing back from the covenanted sacrifice "unto perdition [Greek, *destruction*, *i.e.*, utter, complete and eternal annihilation]" (v. 39). God has no pleasure in those Christians who become wilfully wicked and "draw back unto perdition."

(33) Heb. 12: 15: "Looking diligently lest any man fall of [Greek, *fall back from*, Diaglott] the grace of God." If Satan's error, "once in grace, always in grace," were true, it would be impossible to fall back from the grace of God.

(34) James 5: 19, 20: "Brethren, if any of you [you new creatures, who are already in God's grace] do err from the truth [this does not apply to those who have never known the truth], and one convert him [turn him back]; let him know, that he which converteth [turns back] the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death [the Second Death—destruction, utter, complete and eternal annihilation, symbolized by the lake of fire; Rev. 20: 14; 21: 8; see BS No. 279—a copy free on request], and shall hide a multitude of sins." Remaining in God's grace is conditional upon our being obedient to the Truth and its Spirit!

(35) 1 Pet. 5: 8, 9: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith." But there would be no need to be sober and vigilant in resisting him if we are safely in God's grace and cannot be removed from it.

(36) 2 Pet. 1: 10, 11: "Brethren [you who are already in God's grace], give diligence to make your calling and election sure [it is not sure yet; so do not be deceived by Satan's lie, 'once in grace, always in grace']: for if ye do these things [faithfully cultivate all the fruits of the Spirit mentioned in vs. 5-7], ye shall never fall: for so [and not otherwise] an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

(37) 2 Pet. 2: 20-22: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and [are] overcome [thus falling from the grace they once had], the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness [the right

way'—v. 15], than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." What a forceful illustration of those once in grace not remaining in it!

(38) 1 John 5: 16: "If any man see his [Christian] brother [who is therefore in grace] sin a sin which is not unto death [thus departing from God's grace only measurably], he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death [the Second Death; see BS No. 318—a copy free on request]: I do not say that he shall pray for it [for that would be useless]."

(39) 2 John 8: "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward." If "once in grace, always in grace" were true, this admonition would indeed be meaningless and absurd.

(40) Rev. 2: 10: "Be thou *faithful* unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Here the crown is assured, not to all once in grace, but only to those faithful unto death.

(41) Rev. 2: 11: "He that overcometh ['and keepeth my works unto the end'—v. 26] shall not be hurt of the second death." Here the being *always* in grace is conditioned, not on being *once* in grace, but upon one's *overcoming*.

(42) Rev. 3: 5: "He that overcometh, the same shall [in the resurrection] be clothed in white raiment [actual righteousness]; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." This implies that some will have their names blotted out, having *lost* that grace which they once had.

(43) Rev. 3: 11: "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown [which had been assigned only tentatively and probationarily]." Here again it is not a case of "once in grace, always in grace."

(44) Rev. 3: 21: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." The sitting in the throne is thus shown to be dependent, not upon *being once in grace*, but upon *overcoming*.

(45) Rev. 20: 6: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: *on such* the second death hath no power." This passage shows that the Little Flock, the fully faithful consecrated believers of the Gospel Age, are not in any danger of going into the Second Death *after* their resurrection. It is evident therefore that while they are in the Spirit-begotten condition, in the present life, *before* their resurrection, the Second Death *does* have power against them, because it is possible for them to backslide, and even to become fully unfaithful and go into the Second Death. Thus this text refutes the "eternal security" error.

(46) 2 Pet. 3: 17: "Ye, therefore, beloved [those already in God's grace as Christians], seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked,

fall from your own steadfastness [thus falling from grace]." We headed this article with this text, as it is one of the outstanding texts that show how erroneous and absurd it is to claim that just because one is once in grace he always will be in grace and cannot fall away from it.

We hope and pray that the above texts will assist our readers in fighting the good fight of faith and in resisting one of Satan's most deceptive and dangerous errors—for his design in this error is to cause Christians to relax in their warfare and to take it easy, thinking themselves perfectly safe—thus making them more susceptible to his subtle attacks. Our prayer for all of God's dear consecrated people is, "that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (2 Cor. 6: 1; Heb. 4: 1).

The proper attitude of heart for all who have received Divine grace, is to be zealous to bring forth much fruit and thus to be more and more like our dear Redeemer, daily growing in likeness to Him, as well as in the knowledge of Him (2 Pet. 3: 18). "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (John 15: 8).

*My soul, be on thy guard;
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize.*

*O! watch, and fight, and pray
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help Divine implore.*

*Ne'er think the vict'ry won,
Nor once at ease sit down;
Thine arduous work will not be done,
Till thou hast gained thy crown.*