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"These people are stains on your love feasts. They feast with you without any sense of awe. They are shepherds who care only for themselves. They are waterless clouds blown about by the winds. They are autumn trees that are fruitless, twice dead, and uprooted." Jude 1:12

**TWICE
DEAD**

This brief consideration expose the situation when the purpose of reaching the everlasting life fail.

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Scripture quotations from the New International Version

TWICE DEAD

INTRODUCTION

"These men are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead." Jude 1:12.

Salvation is free for all people. Nobody has to pay the price because it is a gift from God to those who believe in Jesus Christ, as the Bible says:

"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". John 3:16.

Millions around the world have accepted this truth and now are enjoying peace of mind knowing our Lord paid their ransom. Now they don't carry the weight of eternal damnation on their shoulders, and free from sin are confident of their eternal life.

Of course, the promise of John 3:16 is effective because God's people have received Christ and His teachings. However, while forgiveness of sins is a marvelous mercy from God to mankind, this is often taken by Satan to mislead how the salvation works. Let's see how:

We can believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. We can believe that He is the savior on behalf of the world. We also can believe that He died on the cross for the remission of our sins, and so forth. While these are remarkable truths, they can be senseless if we do not receive His teachings to obey them. In other words, to achieve the promise of eternal life we must believe in Christ and obey His teachings.

This was the message spread in all the world by the Apostles. They not only preached salvation in His Name, the obedience to His teachings was included. (For a detailed information of this subject, please read the study "The Law of Jesus Christ").

Here is the point! While salvation by accepting Jesus Christ is generally underscored, obedience to His teachings is something only few pays attention. It appears contemporary Christianity sees obedience unimportant.

Two critical steps (Acts 2:38)

"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins".

Salvation is realized by repenting from all iniquities and by accepting Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins.

Paying attention to Acts 2:38 leads to understand that repentance is the first step prior to baptism and to obey Christ's teachings.

All Jews gathered in Jerusalem, in Pentecost, were touched deeply in their hearts when Peter preached what God had prepared for them. At that moment the crowd was invited to baptism, but firstly they had to repent, repentance is a personal remorse of all wrongdoings against the will of God. Therefore, baptism is effective only when repentance is present. Furthermore, it is important to understand that repentance must last throughout the person's life; this means, repentance can't last just minutes before baptism, it must become part of the person's life.

Meaning of repentance (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

"9 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders,

10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God".

Paul testifies those in the church of Corinth were saints because their life in Christ was clean and free of sinful conduct, because they not only were baptized but entered in a new life, as Paul says: "you were washed, you were sanctified"; in other words, as they became new creatures in Christ, theirs was a new life because the old sinful thoughts and doings disappeared once for all.

The key element to made those believers succeed in reaching their goals is found in Proverbs 4:18:

"The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, shining ever brighter till the full light of day."

No matter how gradual or quick the believers can keep their walking towards everlasting life; while they continue going ahead everything is fine; their faith grows up and strengths, and their relationship with God is closer everyday.

Consequences of falling back to the old life (Luke 9:62)

"Jesus replied, No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

A common situation, very popular among many Christians, is the loss of interest in keeping repentance fresh. It seems that keeping repentance fresh becomes unimportant and tedious; the strength that moved the person to repent and to be baptized diminished, and the interest in keeping the spiritual battle against worldliness falls down to unimportant. The joy and interest in walking under God's will weakens, and those habits left behind in order to follow Christ's teachings gain attention and sympathy. When that happens, believers start avoiding the commitment for sanctification, and repentance becomes boring.

When repentance aging, the baptized's life faces conflicts between spirituality and worldliness, and it starts turning back to wrongdoings because spiritual strength is too weak. Under such situation attending church services often is not affected; participation in church activities continue in high levels, however the person lose the interest for salvation.

DEAD ONCE

Failure with catastrophic consequences (Titus 3:10-11)

"10 Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him.

11 You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned."

Being a Christian without following the steps of our Lord saves nobody. Being a member in a church while spiritual life is mingled with worldliness saves nobody. What makes salvation a reality is the obedience to Christ's teachings.

Personal declarations of being saved by Christ are effective only when sanctification fills the life, because sanctification means obedience to the Holy Scriptures. Nobody can live in sanctification apart from obeying the Holy Scriptures.

In Titus 3:10-11 Paul talks about the mistake of those who thought the eternal life was secured to them while living in the lust of their flesh. According Paul, two warnings to prevent them to continue keeping their wrongdoings were enough, a third one was unnecessary because that person was "self-condemned". This kind of persons had lost any opportunity of salvation because obedience was absent from their life.

They repented and were baptized, and for a period of time received the bread of life with glad and sincere hearts, however, something wrong happened, something that made them leave the life in Christ to turn back to worldliness. Their repentance disappeared and their carnal life became alive again.

The worst part was that they knew nothing about their real condition. While they were members of the congregation and active in different programs, the journey to the kingdom of God came to end, because obedience cannot be substituted by good works, or by participating in church activities, after all, nobody can design another salvation plan than that God has designed, submission to God is all about.

About certain widows, Paul says:

"But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives". (1 Timothy 5:6)

The point, in this study, is not about the condition of those widows, but to show what is the real condition of those who fail disobeying what God command. Persons under this category continue living in the church, however, they are dead and without any opportunity to reach the eternal life even while they live. Another example of people that are spiritually dead while they live is shown in Matthew 7:22-23

"22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'

23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"

A close look of this words show the status of those active in the church that will be despised in the Judgement Day as evildoers, and cast down into the lake of fire, because prophesying, driving out demons, or working of miracles in the name of Jesus Christ, are not demonstrations to assure personal salvation. The Lord has a powerful authority and impact over the demons, however, appealing to His Name to achieve wonderful results does not provide the right of salvation to anybody, because salvation is a gift from God to those who walk under His will.

Wanders are not demonstrations of piety or sanctification, otherwise, those mentioned in Matthew 7 would not be rejected by the Lord.

In conclusion, all these verses show how the eternal life is denied when the personal strength of hope diminish and worldliness are back to leadership.

DEAD TWICE

The mega churches, the medium size churches and the small ones gladly celebrate sunday worships to our Lord Jesus Christ. The singing is lively and exiting, and the sermons are very colorful and rich in content. After the service the attendants go back home with a renovated hope, and the preacher feels he has accomplished his weekly goal.

Missionaries and local pastors know that repentance is the message for those who ear the good news for the first time. The whole world needs to know that there is salvation for every one who accepts Jesus Christ as the only way to escape the horrors in the Judgement Day.

In the other hand, faith and doctrine are for the baptized, for those who are walking into salvation. Not only faith, but doctrine too, after all, faith without doctrine is useless as James 2: 17-19 says:

" 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do."

In James' context "deeds", "works" or "actions" mean obedience. It is clear that nobody will be saved without obedience to the Word of God. Obedience comes first, and the fruit of obedience is faith; thus, faith is the way to demonstrate obedience, that's why "faith without deeds is useless".

In the Bible context, faith has a wide meaning. Faith is not only the assuredness that God will supply our physical needs, the most important meaning of faith is obedience to the will of God, we can read the Scripture and see the many examples how God's people understood faith. Faith meant to them good relationship with God through the obedience to His will. The most famous example of how faith is understood correctly is found in Abraham who is identified as the father of all believers in Christ.

What happens when faith is not accompanied by deeds?

Paul to Titus (1:16), says:

"They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good".

By this report we understand there are those converted to Jesus Christ whose actions are reproachable. They are detestable not only for Paul, or for the congregation but for God. No matter how active they could be, and no matter how long they have been in the church; what really matters is that they are disqualified for the everlasting life.

Nobody is right by declaring to be saved by grace while words are not accompanied by obedience. Nobody can walk in the gospel by faith without deeds, because these deeds mean obedience to God.

In conclusion, being critical for salvation, this topic should be emphasized often because the congregation has to understand the destination for those "unfit for doing anything good".

How long can somebody live as a Christian and in the meantime live in worldliness? It doesn't matter, according to the Holy Scripture all evildoers will be cast down into the lake of fire in the last day to suffer eternal punishment.

Dead twice means dead to Christ while living and being separated to eternal dead in the lake of fire in the last day.

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