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from which they had come out, they would have opportunity to return. But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them" (Heb. 11:15-16).

The faithful will not long for the land from which they came. We are not talking about a hometown, so much as we are talking about that state that we left behind—the state of sin. The hymn that proclaims, "This World is Not My Home" expresses the desire of a disciple. It is not for that abode which was left behind, but it is for that abode which God has prepared. Lot's wife is a prime example. We are not told why she turned back, but we are told that they were commanded not to look behind them. She looked back and she became a pillar of salt (Gen. 19:17, 26).

our responsibility is to set our gaze and affection on Him who goes before us—our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul articulated it best when he wrote, "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12-14).

Therefore, let us not turn back to things left behind. Neither let us set our gaze backwards. A half-hearted commitment to the Lord is simply not enough to become His disciple—a Christian. The Lord wants and commands—by His very sacrifice on the cross of Calvary—our complete and total devotion, service and affection. The next time that you feel the urge to look back, reflect on Who and what it is that you must remove your gaze from to do so.

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com

Unless we are looking back to learn from our mistakes,

**SUPPOSE - JUST SUPPOSE**

Yes, just suppose that next Sunday Jesus stood at the end of the pew where you sit as you were about to place your offering in the collection plate, and just suppose that instead of the collection plate, he held out his hand, the hand that was nailed to the cross for you. Would you be willing to place your offering in that nail pierced hand?

Could you look upon that face stained with blood from the thorn pricked brow; see the body that was beaten and placed upon the cross, could you do this, look him in the eye and say, "Lord I'm giving all I can"?

Suppose as you looked upon Jesus, with the torn hands and feet, the beaten body, the pierced side and head crowned with thorns, he said to you, **This is how I showed my love to love.**

**What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

- Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3
- Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24
- Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30
- Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21
- Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27
- Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

**About the Hillcrest church of Christ**

**Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew**

**How to Contact Us**

Telephone: (920)499-5677  
E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com



**Our Address**

1621 Hillcrest Drive  
Green Bay, WI 54313

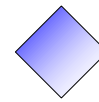


**Schedule of Assembly**

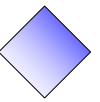
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am  
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am  
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm\*

\*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

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# The Voice of Truth



March 13, 2011

**Questions and Bible Answers**

By Jimmy Pettigrew

**Is the doctrine, "once saved always saved", true or does the Bible teach that a child of God can fall and be lost?**

The N.T. contains an abundance of evidence on the possibility of apostasy.

Jesus taught that some, in the time of temptation, would fall away (Lk. 8:13). **Some did fall.** Judas certainly did fall (Acts 1:25) and he was lost (Jn. 17:12). Judas was not a devil from the beginning. He received his apostleship along with the other Apostles, and he also could cast out devils (Matt. 10:8). *How can Satan cast out Satan?* (Mk. 3:23). Satan entered into Judas (Lk. 22:3; Jn. 13:27). Ananias and Sapphira sinned and died as liars and hypocrites (Acts 5:1-10). How about Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:12-24)? He had the same kind of faith, baptism, and salvation that the Samaritans had that are mentioned in vs. 12-13. He later sinned by trying to buy the gift of transferring miraculous power to others as the Apostles had (vs. 18-19). Peter clearly told him his heart was not right before God and he needed to repent of his wickedness. There is no doubt that Simon is lost. Peter told him he would perish (vs.20), and that he was under the bond of iniquity (vs.23). Hymenaeus and Philetus erred concerning the truth, and by their error, overthrew the faith of others (2 Tim. 2:17-18), and many other disciples abandoned the Lord as well (Jn. 6:66). A Christian can so sin as to be eternally lost, because he can sin as to be in a worse condition than he was before he became a Christian (2 Pet. 2:20-22). In **First Timothy 4:1-2** the Holy Spirit expressly said that some *shall depart from the faith*. Yet, these were **IN THE FAITH!** Paul says the Spirit of God plainly foretold that they would depart from the faith! Dare any man say that one cannot fall, when God so plainly and in so many ways says that man can fall? To those who were *in the grace of Christ* (Gal. 1:6), Paul gives warning that they dare not follow the demands of the law of Moses, else *Christ is become of no effect upon you . . . ye are fallen from grace!* Friends, could it be any plainer?

The Corinthian Christians were admonished to take heed lest they fall (1 Cor. 10:12). There are things for the Christian to do to keep from falling (2 Pet. 1:5-11).

Man can fall from grace, and we've seen it clearly from a number of standpoints!

**Would you please explain why the Church of Christ doesn't have instrumental music? It is mentioned a lot in the Psalms.**

To walk by faith, we must respect and follow the instructions of God for faith comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). God did not accept the offering of Cain because it was not of faith (Gen. 4; Heb. 11:4); he offered *something* but it was not what God had authorized. It is not enough for man just to worship; we must worship in spirit and in truth for our worship to be acceptable (Jno. 4:23-24).

Churches of Christ do not use instruments in the worship of God because it is not authorized in the N.T. We must not presume that God will accept just any kind of music, but use in the worship the kind He has authorized to be used in worship today. Singing is the kind of music that is plainly commanded (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 14:15; Rom. 15:9).

God tells us that the O.T. was to be replaced with the N.T. (Jer. 31:31-34). And He tells us that it was. The O.T. was *nailed to the cross* (Col. 2:14), *abolished in his flesh* (Eph. 2:15), and *disannulled* (Heb. 7:18). Jesus Christ is *the mediator of the New Testament* (Heb. 9:15); and *He took away the first, that he might establish the second* (Heb. 10:9). Now, what could be plainer than that? God designed the law as a *schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ* (Gal. 3:24). It was not designed to last any longer, so it was removed at the cross. But some still keep going back to that law, and God spoke again through Paul, *Ye are*

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severed from Christ, ye who would be justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4). If we seek to justify instrumental music by the O.T., we sever ourselves from Christ and fall from His grace! Friends, the word law also refers to the book of Psalms. Notice: But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause (Jno. 15:25). Where is this found in the law? . . . hate me without a cause (Psa. 35:19; also look at Jno. 10:34; Psa. 82:6; Jno. 12:34; Psa. 89:36).

We live under the N.T. Our lives, our worship, our hopes are defined in the N.T. Because the N.T. does not authorize instruments, nor incense, nor animal sacrifices, churches of Christ do not practice such in worship to God.

**If somebody has accepted the Lord Jesus in repentance, and dies before baptism, wouldn't he go into the kingdom of God?**

There are Scriptures that provide a clear answer. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved (Mk. 16:16), Except one be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (Jno. 3:5), Are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? (Rom. 6:3), Now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins (Acts 22:16). These passages show the Lord's purpose for baptism. So,

**"With Christ"**  
**By Jarrod Jacobs**

The phrase "with Christ" is found nine times in the Bible. It is important that we study this phrase because it shows a special relationship; a partnership, or a close fellowship that we can enjoy with our Lord. Let us look at some ways we can be "with Christ."

**We Can Be Dead "With Christ."**

In the book of Romans, the apostle Paul compares baptism to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. In Romans 6, he asked the question, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6:3). He also asked, "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him" (Rom. 6:8).

How are we to be "dead with Christ"? Are we to die

in light of the above Scriptures, answer these questions:

1. Is one saved before baptism? (Mk. 16:16). NO!
2. Is one in the kingdom before baptism? (Jno. 3:5). NO!
3. Is one in Christ before baptism? (Rom. 6:3). NO!
4. Are sins washed away before baptism? (Acts 22:16). NO!

If one is not looking for a loophole to keep from doing what God plainly teaches, it is not difficult to understand the answer to the question. If a man dies on his way to his own wedding, is his intended bride a widow? If one dies before being sworn in as a new citizen, is he a citizen anyway? The truth is that no one can accept the Lord Jesus without baptism, for it was the Lord who put baptism into the gospel and required it of all who would come to him. One cannot accept the Lord by faith only, by confession only, by repentance only, nor by baptism only. All, not just one, of those are required by Christ. One accepts the Lord only when he is willing to accept the kind of life which the Lord requires. That life begins with faith that repents and submits in baptism, from which one is raised to walk in newness of life in submission to Jesus Christ.

Christ doesn't give us options about how to accept Him. The truth is that until one is baptized into Christ (Rom. 6:3), he is not in Christ. Until one believes and is baptized, he is not saved (Mk. 16:16). Until one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (Jno. 3:5). And until one is baptized into Christ, into his death (Rom. 6:3), his sins have not been washed away (Acts 22:16). •

physically as He did? Can we sacrifice our lives as Christ did? No, the answer lies in verse six. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. 6:6). The death that occurs is the death of the man of sin! As Christ died on the cross, so our man of sin must be "crucified" (put to death). On another occasion, the apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). Therefore, we must crucify the old man so as to bring our lives in harmony with Christ!

**We Can Be Risen "With Christ."**

Just as Christ arose the third day, so also one who has

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died with Christ rises "to walk in newness of life" when he comes up out of the waters of baptism (Rom. 6:4). When the apostle Paul wrote to the Christians at Colosse, he said, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1). Being risen with Christ demands we have a new and different attitude about serving God, and life in general. This is proven in the next verse: "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:2). Please read Colossians 3:5-17 and notice the complete change that one goes through as a result of obeying God's plan of salvation. Being risen with Christ means a complete change! No longer are we obsessed with worldly things. Sadly, too many Christians forget this. They are more worried about their earthly existence than their future home in Heaven. They are more worried about "things on earth" rather than the "things which are above" When this happens, beware! One in this situation is not "with Christ" as he ought to be.

**We Can Be Joint-Heirs "With Christ."**

In Romans 8:16-17, Paul wrote, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Please remember this was

written to Christians. This letter is not addressed to everyone (Rom. 1:7). Make note of the words which show a connection between us, God, and Christ. The Scripture says a Christian is: 1. A child of God. 2. An heir of God. 3. A joint-heir with Christ. 4. Sufferers with Christ. 5. Glorified with Christ. These words should cut us to the heart! God and Christ loved us enough to create us, sustain us, and then allow us to be in Heaven one day for eternity. By simple obedience to God's word, we can be a joint-heir with the Son of God! We can be glorified with the Son of God! What can compare to that? Yet, to experience this, we must first suffer with Him. Peter wrote, "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (I Pet. 4:16). Notice also the truth taught in II Timothy 3:12: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Paul told the Philippians, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Phil. 1:29).

**Conclusion**

Do you want to be a joint-heir with Christ and enjoy Heaven in eternity? You must first be buried with Him, and then rise with Him in the newness of life. You must also endure hardships for a little while (II Cor. 4:17), but the result is eternal life and blessing with God. Will you do this for Christ after what He has done for you (Rom. 5:8)?

Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

**Backwards Looking Christians**  
**By Jonathan L. Perz**

Are you a backwards looking Christian? Lest you think this an unkind question, it is not asked in a derogatory sense. Quite the contrary. Phrased differently, we might ask, "Are you one who has begun to follow the Lord, only to be plagued by the constant tendency to look back at that which you have left behind?"

While speaking to those who would become His disciples, Jesus strongly condemns this tendency. "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). What is it that was left behind that continues to hinder our ability to press forward?

Family, friends and loved ones are one of the greatest attention grabbers for backwards looking Christians! Jesus warned, "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of me. And he who does not take

his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds His life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it" (Matt. 10:37-39; cf. Luke 14:26-27).

For many, being a disciple of Christ means leaving behind loved ones—this is because the path disciples choose to follow takes them in an entirely different direction from the path unbelieving loved ones have chosen. Looking back and longing after the unbelievers expresses a desire to follow them, instead of the Lord, therefore rendering one unfit for the kingdom of God. We don't have to rejoice in the sad choice loved ones have made to follow something other than "The Way" (John 14:6), but neither should we regret our choice (i.e., look back).

Remembering places left behind is another stumbling block for backwards looking Christians. The Hebrew writer says, "And truly if they had called to mind that country

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