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## **ETERNAL SECURITY—PART I**

Take your Bible and turn to Ephesians chapter one this morning. For three weeks I put a program on the radio on the subject of “Eternal Security.” Now, just a few weeks ago, I brought a board up here, and I asked you if you would be ready to give an answer. If you had to defend your faith; if you had to defend your doctrine; if you had to explain to somebody how you know you’re saved and you cannot lose it, can you do that?

And so, this morning we’re going to talk about one subject. I don’t know that we will get through with it. If not, we’ll finish it next Sunday, Lord willing. But it’s the subject of “Once Saved, Always Saved” or “Security of the Believer.” Now, that’s called a lot of different things. Baptists, for years, printed material that said they believed in the “perseverance” of the saints. I don’t believe in that. I don’t believe all saints persevere. I believe some saints wilt. I believe some saints quit. I believe some saints turn their back on God. But I don’t believe they go to hell. If you’re saved, you’re not going to hell. Now, some people say, “I believe you can lose it.” You can’t lose it if you’ve got it. Now the problem is: Do you have it?

### **WHAT WE DON’T BELIEVE**

And so, we’re going to say, first of all, what we don’t believe. We don’t believe you can be saved and do whatever you want to and get away with it. We don’t believe that. Now, I’m going to read Ephesians 1:13, and then we’re going to look at a lot of other scripture, back and forth. But the Bible says in Ephesians 1:13, (Let’s read verse twelve to get a little bit better idea of the context.) It says, “That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, (Now that’s you trusting in Jesus Christ, and notice the word “trusted.”)

after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.” So the Bible says that you believed, or rather, you heard, you believed, you trusted, and you were sealed. Now the word “trusted” there is important because (And we’ll say this probably over and over again in this lesson.) when we say the way to salvation is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that word “believe” means: to trust with all of your heart. People say, “I believe in Jesus...” (The Bible says in the book of James that the devils believe in God.) So, we know that “believe” is more than just acknowledging that there is a God. It means trusting him for your salvation. Paul said in II Timothy 1:12, “I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able (God is able.) to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” What is God able to keep? He’s able to keep my soul. You know who I’m trusting to keep my soul? I’m trusting God. I’m not trusting me.

I’d better stop right here and say this, I’m not as interested in what Baptists believe as I am what the Bible says; however, Baptists are known for a couple of unique doctrines and one of them is “Once Saved, Always Saved.” One of the things that stand out in the doctrine of the Baptist church is that we have forever as Baptists believed that when you’re saved, you are eternally secure, and that you cannot lose it. So if I equate the Baptist church with the belief of eternal security, it is because that is one of our trademarks. And hardly anyone else believes in it. Now there are a few. But I have good family, good friends who believe that you get saved by trusting Jesus Christ, but that then you can lose it. Every time I’ve asked them, “What can you do to lose it?” They start by saying, “Well, if I do this, and I do that...” And I say, “Then you’re depending on you to get to heaven.” I’m not depending on me to get to heaven. I’m depending on him to get me to heaven—and that is the difference.

With that in mind, take your Bible and turn to I Corinthians 3. I'll tell you why there are some people who are saved and unhappy (Probably some of them in here this morning.) You're out of the will of God. That's why you don't enjoy church. That's why you don't enjoy your Bible. That's why you don't enjoy prayer. That's why you don't enjoy soul winning. That's why you don't enjoy tracting. That's why you don't enjoy songs. That's why you don't enjoy praise. That's why you don't enjoy a lot of things. Remember, I'm talking first this morning about what we don't believe. I want to talk about eternal security and why we believe in eternal security, but it needs to be abundantly clear, especially since we're going to put this material out on radio and on tape and so on. We do not believe that because of eternal security, that means you can do as you please and get away with it. You cannot do as you please and get away with it. If you're saved you're going to answer to a holy and righteous God—here and there! The Bible says this in I Corinthians 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." You say, "Well, here I am, and God hasn't destroyed me yet." Maybe he's just destroyed your joy. Maybe he's destroyed your peace. You see the "you" that's the real "you" now is on the inside. David prayed after his sin with Bath-sheba, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." His joy had been destroyed. His peace was destroyed. His assurance was destroyed. How many of you are saved, but because of sin and not reading your Bible and not going to church, or something in your life that wasn't right, there were times in your life where you didn't have any assurance of your salvation? My hand is up. You know why I didn't have any assurance? I was out of the book. I was out of the will of God. You can destroy your assurance. You can destroy a lot of things.

## IF GOD IS YOUR FATHER

But look now at Hebrews 12. And look at verse six. We do not believe that you can do as you please and get away with it. I want to make that clear to anybody that gets this material and says, “Well, Baptists believe this and Baptists believe that...” I believe in coming to the defense of other denominations, by the way. You need to be careful about saying, “Well, the Church of Christ believe this, and the Methodists believe that, and the Church of God believe this, and the Presbyterians believe that...” I’ll tell you something you better find out. When you say, “Baptists believe...” I can take you to some Baptist churches that probably don’t believe it. You can’t stereotype in our day anymore. It’s beyond that. I mean you’ve got some wild Baptist churches out there. You’ve got some Baptist churches that are so far out, I wish they’d take the name Baptist off their church. Amen. Hebrews 12:6, “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.” That’s not a cuss word; that’s a Bible word. And what that means is if you can sin and get away with it, you’re not the child of God. And I’m going to tell you something...If you can enjoy living in sin, for long at all, there’s something bad wrong. If you can live in sin and God does not whip you...And God’s whippings are on the inside. By the way, sometimes God will whip you from the pulpit. Did you know that’s what the Bible teaches? That God will use a preacher to help you get back in line so that God won’t have to do it. I’d rather have a preacher rake me over the coals as to have God put me on my back in a hospital. Amen. But the Bible says that if you’re without chastisement, then you’re not a child of God. If you sin, you cannot get away with it. God will keep you awake at

night. God will wear you out. God will make you uncomfortable. God will make you miserable. God will make you bitter. God will make you depressed. But you cannot sin and get away with it—if you're truly saved. So if you're here this morning saying, "I'm saved," but you're out of the will of God; you're living in sin; you are literally doing things on a consistent basis that you know God is not pleased with; and you're happy with it; yeah, check out your salvation. You say, "Are you trying to tell me that I'm not saved?" I'm trying to tell you that you better check it out. You cannot be saved and live in sin and be happy with it. So, first of all, we don't believe that you can be saved and do as you please.

We believe at salvation, that Christ, through the Holy Spirit, lives within this mortal, physical body; and that, therefore, there is a desire within to please our heavenly father. You see, if you're truly saved, inside of you is a desire to please God—more than you want to please yourself. And while we sin, we won't continue in sin, or God will get us. I get bothered by things that people are comfortable saying, and things they're uncomfortable hearing. You know what lost people say? "The booger man's going to get you!" Who's the booger man? You shouldn't tell your kids that. Let me tell you something else. Rhonda and I were talking about this the other day. Don't use me to get your kids in line. Rhonda's overheard some parents saying, "You better be quiet, Bro. Ron's coming. Bro. Ron's going to get you." Hey, wake up! No wonder I'm the enemy. You know what you ought to say, "You better quit that, God's going to get you." Now see, you're not comfortable with that. They shouldn't fear me, they ought to fear God. Tell your kids, "If you don't do right, God's going to get you. God's going to wear you out. God's going to spank you. God's going to discipline you. God's going to chastise you. You better please God, because God's going to..." That's what I'd tell them. You want them to fear God or man? The fear of man bringeth a

snare. Amen. Okay, maybe there's a better choice of words. You don't want to use God as a heavenly policeman who is out to throw kids in jail; but, they need to understand that God hates sin.

So I do not believe, and Baptists as a whole, do not believe that if you're saved you can do as you please. We believe that if you're saved, you will desire to please God. You'll want to please God. So, saying then what we don't believe, the question is "What do we believe?"

## **FIRST THINGS FIRST**

Well, the first thing you're going to have to do if you're going to deal with people about eternal security is to deal with them about how to be saved. So, what do we believe about salvation? And see, this is where you're going to run into a stumbling block; you're going to come to a crossroads with so many people because they're not going to get straight on eternal security until they're straight on salvation. If they believe that you have to repent and be baptized and take the Lord's Supper and live a good life and go to church to get to heaven, you're never going to get them straight on eternal security. You have to get them straight on salvation. You understand what I'm saying? I'll ask you this question: Let's see...Patrick, when were you born? 1986. So, that makes you how old? You're 21. Where were you born? Pulaski. He was born in 1986. Now, Patrick, I want you to become unborn. Can you do it? No. Jesus said, "You must be born again." Can you become unborn? See he was born the first time in 1986, but he's been born again. If you can't be unborn, how can you be unsaved? Are you with me? See, I believe salvation is being born again. I don't believe salvation is trying to live a good life. I've been born again, "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed by the word of

God which liveth and abideth forever,” Peter says. And so if you can’t be unborn, then you can’t be unsaved (once you’re saved) because salvation is being born again. By the way, Jesus said, “Ye must be born again.” He didn’t say, “Ye must be born again and again and again and again and again.” Amen. Once you get born again, that’s fixed. You can’t be unborn.

Now, what do you do to be born again? Well, Paul said in Acts 16:31, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” Amen? That’s simple enough. Romans 10:9 says, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” That’s what the Bible says. Romans 10:13, “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” John 1:12, “As many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” That word “believe” means “trust.” I John 5:13, “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.”

You talk to people that say they can lose their salvation, and you know what? They don’t know if they’ve got it or not. I John 5:13 says you can know if you’ve got it or not. How many of you know you’re saved, say, “Amen.” Amen. You can know it. Now, if you believe that you can lose it, then you never know if you lose it. And by the way, all the people that believe you can lose it never lose it. Have you all ever noticed that? You talk to somebody that says, “I believe you can lose your salvation.” You say, “Have you lost yours?” “No!” They don’t believe you can lose it. One TV preacher believes you can run around with prostitutes and not lose it. Well, I mean, he taught that you could lose your salvation. Then he did that and kept preaching. Now, if that won’t cause you to lose your salvation, I’d like to know what you have to do. You say that’s too graphic of an illustration. I’m showing you the

ludicrousness of people who claim to believe something they don't even believe. If you're confused about how to be saved, then you're going to be confused as to whether or not you really are saved. It's a spiritual work. And so we believe that salvation is placing your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and him alone, and he'll save you.

We went to Taft Juvenile Correction Facility Friday night. Some of the guys were out of town so we were a little shorthanded, and we only went into the chapel service. There were eighteen teenagers in there. I basically preached my testimony. I preached on the word "Free"—how many different ways the Bible uses the word "free." I was preaching on bondage. (It's amazing how God works.) There were two boys on the back just causing trouble the whole service. And I'd only been preaching about ten to fifteen minutes, and I said, "Some of you are in bondage, but you don't even know it." And I looked back at those two boys and said, "You guys back there, your problem is you're in bondage to your ego. You're trying to show me and these other guys how tough you are and trying to act like you're not interested, but the problem is that you're scared to death and you're trying to cover it up with your ego." And boy it got quiet in there. And I went on and preached my testimony, and I asked how many wanted to get saved. And five boys raised their hands. And three of them got saved. And an eighteen year old came to me. His first name was Jay. He said, "I need to talk to you." And I said, "Okay. What's on your mind?" He said, "I want to get saved." I like that! I didn't say, "One, two, three, repeat after me..." He came to me and said, "I want to be saved." I said, "Well, sit down right here, and let's talk about it." I said, "Do you know how to be saved?" He said, "Yes." I said, "How do you know?" He said, "I used to go to church when I was a kid." I said, "What kind of church?" He said, "A Baptist church." I said, "Then what do you think you need to do to be saved?" He said, "I believe you need to trust Jesus Christ. I believe if I ask

Jesus Christ to save me, he will.” I said, “Let me ask you something. Did you know that Jesus died on a cross for you and came up the third day?” He said, “Yeah.” I said, “Do you really believe that?” And he said, “Yeah.” I said, “Well, I’m going to show you in the Bible where it says that.” And I showed him Romans 10:9. And I said, “Now, do you believe that?” And he said, “Yeah.” And I took him to Acts 16:31, and I said, “Do you believe that?” I made him read it to me. And I said, “Now do you believe that?” He said, “Yeah.” I said, “So, you already know what to do.” He said, “Yes, sir.” I said, “Do you want to get saved right now in front of all of these people?” He said, “Yes, sir.” I said, “So, are you willing to pray and ask him to save you?” And he said, “Yes, sir!” I said, “Well, pray!” So, he started praying. And in the middle of his prayer, he started bawling like a baby. And I didn’t know what he was about to say. Barely eighteen years old, he said, “God, I have two kids at home. I need you to save me, so I can help my kids.” And boy, when he got through praying, I had chill bumps running up and down my spine. He had tears rolling down his face. And I said, “Let me ask you something, Jay, do you believe right now if you died you’d go to heaven?” He said, “Yes, sir!” I didn’t have to convince him he was saved. You know why? He trusted Jesus Christ. He’s sitting in a maximum security juvenile detention center surrounded by a bunch of people that are going to be nothing but trouble for him. And he’s got assurance of salvation, and there are people sitting in Baptist churches not too sure. You know the difference? He’s trusting Jesus Christ. What else is he going to trust? I mean, how’s he going to get out and live a good life? He may not get out. He can’t trust his baptism; he may not even get baptized. He can’t trust the Lord’s Supper; what’s he going to do? I’ll tell you what he did. He trusted Jesus Christ.

Bro. Connie Gullatt dealt with two other men in the back. Both of them got saved. One of them had tattoos all the

way around his neck...tattoos on his body. He got saved. I can imagine some of these people telling him, "If you're going to get saved, you're going to have to get rid of those tattoos. If you're going to get saved, you're going to have to do this and you're going to have to do that." No, you're going to have to trust him if you want to get saved. That's the only way to get saved. And when you trust Jesus Christ, he gives you eternal life. That's what he does. He gives it to you. It's a gift.

## **EVERLASTING, ETERNAL, OR TEMPORARY?**

Take your Bible and turn to John 3. Now, I'm just giving you some ammunition. I'll give you a little bit more concrete stuff here in just a minute. I hope you all will forgive me. I'm going to pick this morning to bring up something that I've thought of many times over the last five years. Teach your children John 3:16 correctly. John 3:16 gets butchered more in this church than any verse I've heard butchered in my life. You know why? A lot of times kids can't remember their verse so they just come up here to say John 3:16. And they'll just throw it out there and butcher it. What does John 3:16 say? Let's look at it. It says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have (What?) everlasting life." Now, look at verse eighteen. "He that (What?) believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten son of God." Look at verse thirty-six. "He that (What?) believeth on the son (Next word?) hath (Past, present, or future?)" Right now he's got it—what's he got right now? All right, if you took it away from him, was it everlasting? Then Jesus Christ would be a liar, wouldn't he? You see, I believe common sense will get you a long way in the Bible. If God says, "If you'll trust my son, I'm going to give you eternal life." And you say, "Okay, I'm trusting him." And he gives you eternal life. And then you

go out, and you hit your thumb with a hammer and say something you shouldn't have said, and God says, "I'm taking it back." Then it never was eternal life. It was temporary life. Aren't you glad the Bible doesn't say, "He that hath the Son hath possibly everlasting life...potentially everlasting life...temporary life." I'm glad that the Bible says, "He that hath the Son hath everlasting life." God gave me eternal life.

## **DOES GOD KNOW YOU?**

All right now take your Bible and turn to Galatians 4 and Matthew 7. Let's go to Galatians 4 first of all. Let me show you what happened when you got saved. Galatians 4:6 "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Howbeit then, (Watch this.) when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, (I like the way this is worded.) after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God..." See, when you get saved all of a sudden God says, "Yeah, I know him." Before you're saved—"No, I don't know him." It says when you get saved you are known of God. Now, that word "know" there is that intimate knowledge. God knows your existence, but does he know you personally? No!—not according to Galatians 4. And yet I won't take the time to turn to Matthew 7. I gave you that reference. You can look it up. It's at the judgment seat. One of these days Jesus Christ is going to look at a crowd of believers that are lost and on their way to hell, and he's going to say this, "I never knew you." Now, if he knew them, and then they lost it, he couldn't say, "I never knew you." He'd have to say, "Well, I used to know you...but now I don't." But he says, "I never knew you." That's another example of eternal security.

All right, now let me give you another one. Turn to I

Corinthians 3. Look at verse eleven. I've asked dozens of people, and I mean probably dozens literally. Okay, what do you do to lose it? "Well, you get out in sin, and you stay in sin." And I take them to this passage. The Bible says in I Corinthians 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;" So you've got a foundation, the foundation is Christ, and you're building upon it. Verse 13, "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day (That's the day of judgment.) shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be (what?) saved; yet so as by fire." So the Bible teaches that if you go out and do some evil works, some bad works, some unfruitful works; you're going to suffer loss, but you're not going to suffer losing your salvation. Now, I know what some people say to that. They say, "Well, that's talking about works, not sin." Let me tell you something. How can you do a bad work and it not be a sin? People start playing around with the words sometimes and just confuse themselves. The Bible says, "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is? Sin." You can't separate works and sins in that sense. If I do a bad work, it's a sin; if I do a good work, it's not a sin. And that's the reason they get confused about II Corinthians 5:10. I've heard people try to explain this and say, "Well, this is a judgment of your works, not your sins." And the reason they do that is Baptists have a bad habit of teaching traditions of men or clichés as doctrine. They say, "Well, once you get saved, God casts your sins as far as the east is from the west and remembers it no more. And then when you ask God to forgive you of your sins after you get saved, he'll do the same thing." That's what Baptists sort of teach. But I don't find any Bible to say that. I don't have any Bible that tells me that after I get

saved, and sin and ask God to forgive me; that it'll never come up again at the judgment seat. I just don't believe that. I believe it will come up at the judgment seat. II Corinthians 5:10—the Bible says, “For we (That's Paul talking.) all (I guess that includes all of us.) must appear (Where?) before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done whether it be good or (What?) bad.” Now, if you do something bad, is it a sin? Well, of course it is. And so, I've heard Baptists say this, “Well, see that's not talking about sins; that's talking about works—good or bad works.” How can a bad work not be a sin? And what they're doing is trying to protect their doctrine that when you get forgiveness and plead the blood, it'll never come up again. What scripture are you going to use to prove that? If it's never going to come up again, then I shouldn't even be chastised once I get forgiveness. And yet, God's going to chastise his children. So, I think it's dangerous to teach that once you're saved, you can sin, ask forgiveness, and that's the end of it. I don't believe that. I can prove that. I could embarrass my wife this morning by chewing her out and slapping her. She could forgive me, and God could forgive me. But I guarantee the consequences are gonna be around for quite some time. Right? You're on dangerous ground, in my opinion, when you start teaching that you can sin, ask forgiveness, and it's all over. And it'll never come up again. I just don't believe that. All right, that'd be a blanket statement for anybody to just go out and do as they please. I don't believe you can do that. Now, my point being that in I Corinthians 3 sin will cause you to suffer loss. But you'll be saved, as yet by fire. You know what I think some Christians are gonna do, they're gonna get into heaven by the skin of their teeth. I think that's what I Corinthians 3 teaches. You're gonna fuss and fight all the way, and make a mess of things all the way, and never have anything to show for it when you get there. But because of the great grace and mercy of God, you're gonna get in because you are saved. But you'll lose rewards. And

you'll suffer loss, the Bible says. So, we don't believe you can do as you please and get away with it. And we don't believe that sin is just gonna be forgiven after you're saved, and never have to be dealt with.

## **ARE YOU "IN CHRIST"?**

All right, take your Bible and turn to Romans 8. And by the way, I would add—if I were you and taking notes, and some of you are, and I appreciate that—I Corinthians 5 to the list, with a man sleeping with his step-mother and he still gets saved. The Bible says that his body will be destroyed, but his spirit will be saved. That's a guy committing incest. If you study I Corinthians 5 that's what it teaches. It teaches that here's a man; he's fornicating, whoremongering—whatever you want to call it. It's incest. And yet, the Bible says, "Turn him over to the devil that he may destroy his flesh, and his spirit may be saved." Isn't that a blessing? To know that when you're saved—you know what God will do? He'll take you out of here. Now, I mean that. This is going to sound terrible. I'm looking at—as far as I'm concerned—the cream of the crop. But, I'm going to tell you something. If you're saved and you're not trying to please the Lord ever, and you don't suffer for it inside; you don't have any scourging or chastisement going on; you better check your salvation out. And if God leaves you alone, and doesn't take you out of here, you might ask yourself if you're saved. I mean that. And I'm not trying to talk anybody out of their salvation. But a Christian simply cannot get away with living in sin. I used to wonder how Christians could do some of the things they do, and I have a bad thought, and the next thing I know I've got a fever blister and I ask God, "What did I do wrong?" Now, I was hyper-conscious when I was lost. Honestly. I had that hyper-sensitive conscience that, man, I'm guilty. But do you know what the Bible says when David numbered Israel? It says his heart smote him. When's the last time your heart smote you? You can sit

there and watch a filthy movie on TV and your heart not smite you? You've got a problem. You can listen to godless music and your heart not smite you? You've got a problem. You look at magazines you're not supposed to be looking at and your heart doesn't smite you? You don't feel guilty; you don't feel dirty; you don't feel like, "Oh, no! What have I done? I can't believe I did this,?" You've got a problem. You can use any kind of language you want and God not smite you? You've got a problem. I'm telling you, if you're saved and you sin, you're going to face it—not only here, but there. Now, turn to this passage in Romans chapter eight. Look at verse one. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The Bible says that if you're in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation. You don't have to worry about going to hell. Now, that's a plain verse. "There is therefore now no condemnation if you're in Christ Jesus." But what I want you see there is the wording—"in Christ Jesus."

Turn to Ephesians chapter five. Look at verse thirty. When you get saved, you are placed in the body of Christ. "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Isn't that what it says? You're one with Christ. Back up to Ephesians 2:6. Notice that Paul (on the earth) says, "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:" Paul talks about it like it's already taken place. What does that mean? Paul's a member of the body of Christ. What's the body of Christ? It's a spiritual body. Who's the head of that body? Jesus Christ is. And we're members of his flesh. We're members of his body. We're one with Christ. Now, if I go to hell, what does that mean? That means Jesus is going to hell with me. And he isn't going to hell. He's already been. According to Acts chapter two, Jesus Christ went to hell. That's what it says. It says his soul was not left in hell. You know why he went to hell? To dump my sins.

And to dump your sins. And he dumped them. And now he's ascended upon high, led captivity captive. (We'll talk about that next week.) But the point being that if he has to go to hell again, that's double jeopardy. He's not going to hell again. He's already done it. He said, "It's finished."

Now, do this. Turn to Philippians 1. Let me ask you something. The Bible says that unless the Father draws you, you cannot come to the Lord. How many of you know that when you got saved it's because God took the initiative. Let me see your hands. It's not because you took the initiative. You know why you prayed and asked the Lord to save you? Because he sent somebody your way to tell you the truth, to preach to you; and the Holy Spirit of God convicted you. Jesus said that if I be lifted up, I will (What?) draw all men. He also said that unless the Father draws you, you can't come. So, God took the initiative. I John says we love him why? Because he first loved us. All right, turn to Philippians 1:6. Paul says, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:" I guess if you believe you can lose your salvation, God doesn't finish what he starts. You believe God finishes what he starts? What's the good work that he's begun in you? It says, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:" Romans chapter eight...when God saved you, you know what he did? He started working on you to conform you to the image of Jesus Christ. He wants you to be like his son. And he's going to conform you to the image of Jesus Christ. One of these days, whether it's screaming all the way there, or rejoicing all the way there, you're going to end up like Jesus Christ if you're saved. You know why? Because God finishes what he starts. God's going to finish the work.

### **SPIRITUAL CIRCUMCISION**

Now we're going to stop this morning by asking you to

turn to Colossians, and we'll introduce what we'll try to talk about next week. I'll say a lot in the next four minutes. Well, most of you know this stuff; but, if you've never been taught this, you're going to think it's confusing. There's nothing confusing about it. The problem is we don't read the Bible like we ought to. Colossians 1:12 says, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which has mad us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:" I want you to look at verse thirteen again. "Who hath (Somebody tell me the next word. Delivered? Right? Delivered! Past tense.) delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath (what?) translated us..." You've already been translated. That's one of the things I like that one preacher points out about a King James Bible. They say, "Well, it's only a translation." That word's used three times in the Bible, and that preacher points out that in every case the translation is better than the original. Amen. You know what you're looking at? You're looking at the original. But I'm going to get translated even physically. Inside, I've already been translated. I'm already in another world. They say, "Man, he's from another planet." Thank you! They say, "He's in a world of his own." Thank you! They say, "He's in left field." Thank you! They say, "He isn't right." Thank you! They said that Paul was beside himself. You know what "beside yourself" means? It means there are two of you. You're schizo! He's beside himself. Much learning doth make thee what? Mad! He's a lunatic; he's crazy. How can you be beside yourself? Well, there's one of you right here, and there's another one beside you. That's me. I'm schizo; I've got two natures. I've got two people. You're looking at two different people. There's an old man in here that's wicked to the core, but there's a new man in here that wants to shout, "Glory to God; hallelujah," and say, "Come, Lord Jesus!" Yeah, I'm beside myself. I'm not from this world. Jesus said to Pilate, "I'm not of this world." This is not my kingdom. And I'm not of this

world. Say, “Who’s talking?” That’s the new man. Every now and then I try to fit into this world, that’s the old man. You all understand what I’m saying? Now, look at Colossians 2 and we’ll close. Look at verse ten. “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom (Look at verse 11.) also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands,” Now what’s circumcision? It’s the cutting off of the flesh. Now you look at what this verse says. “In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein ye also are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God.” An operation took place. God’s a surgeon. And when you got saved he circumcised you spiritually. You know what he did? He cut your body loose from your soul. Because in the Old Testament, every time the body sinned, it was connected to the soul like an umbilical cord. That’s what it’s like. And when that new birth takes place, they cut it. Right? And when you became a new creature in Christ, God cut your body loose from your soul, so that no matter what you do in this stinking body it will not affect your soul. You know why? Because God said, “He’ll mess up. He’s no good. I have to fix it so that when he messes up, what I fixed can’t be touched.” So, I’m going to heaven, why? Because I’ve got a great God. Not because I’m a good guy, not because I’ve tried real hard, not because I’ve done my best; but, because God fixed it where I couldn’t mess it up. That’s eternal security, amen?

## **ETERNAL SECURITY—PART II**

All right, go to Colossians 2. We have a little bit of review this morning before we talk a little bit more about “Security of the Believer.” Now, this is a subject as I said last week that is unique to Baptist doctrine. And it’s a subject that gets attacked and criticized and has a lot of different variations. So, I want to make sure we know where we stand and why we believe what we believe. I said just a few weeks ago from that passage in I Peter 3:15—Be ready always to give every man an answer. Now, you need to be able to defend what you believe. I understand with a new Christian, but some of you folks that have been saved a long time shouldn’t say, “Well, our pastor believes...” What do you believe? It’s important for you to know what you believe. That’s okay for you to tell people what your pastor believes. I don’t have a problem with that. But when it comes to believing the book, believing doctrine, believing certain things, you need to be able to say, “I believe...and here’s why I believe it.” Now, in Colossians 2, we’re going to come to this in a round about way. Here’s the passage that I think the vast majority of so-called professing Christians miss. This is the subject that just doesn’t get talked about much in most circles. The Bible says in Colossians 2 verse 10, “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom (Now you’re in Christ according to Ephesians 5. If you’re saved you’re in Christ. And the Bible says here,) In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, (According to the Bible you’ve been circumcised with a circumcision that was made without hands. And the Bible here goes on to say,) in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, (That has nothing to do with water baptism.) wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the (Here it is again.) operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” God performed

surgery on you. And it's a surgery he can make without hands. I mean, God can say, "Let there be light," and there's light. Can he not? God can perform surgery just by speaking it. Wouldn't you like to have a surgeon like that? Heart, be healed. Leg, be whole. Eyes, be whole. That's what God can do. And so without hands he performed surgery on you. He performed a spiritual circumcision. So, we're going to talk a little bit about what that means and how it relates to security of the believer.

Now, take your Bible and turn to II Corinthians 5 and before we talk at length about Colossians 2, I want you to remember this passage. This has come up a lot over the last few weeks. I was talking to Bro. Jim and Bro. Brad about this the other day. And I don't claim to fully understand this passage, but I'm not going to claim that it means something just because it fits my doctrine. You know what we tend to do? We find a verse that fits our doctrine and make the verse say something it doesn't say. And that's what my Baptist leaders said when I first got saved. For lack of better terms—they told me that you don't have to get baptized to be saved. Because I was confused—I had gone to the Church of Christ for several years, and when I was trying to get saved and figure out salvation, and when I finally got saved, I said, "Well, do you have to get baptized?" And they said, "Well, no, you don't. And so, I started reading my Bible and I came to Acts 2:38—"Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins." And I went to my pastor and I said, "What does that mean? You told me I don't have to get baptized." And you know what my pastor told me? He told me that verse said something it didn't say because he wanted it to fit his doctrine. And I went to two or three other people and said, "Explain that verse to me." The guy that led me to the Lord—he made that verse say something it didn't say. He said, "Well, what that means is..." You know what that verse means? It means what it says. But it's Peter talking

to a bunch of Jews who are asking what to we do in the light that we've killed the Messiah, now what do we do? It's not like Acts 16:30. In Acts 16:30, the question is, "What must I do to be saved?" Here they said, "In light of what we've done, now tell us what to do." And Peter who still believed in Judaism, and still was struggling with works and faith, which is clear from Acts 15, said, "Repent, and be baptized." And so I wish my pastor had said, "Well, that's Peter talking to Jews; that has nothing to do with you." I could have accepted that. But when you start changing the word of God to fit your doctrine, you're on dangerous ground. There are some things I believe, folks, that I can find a verse that makes it hard on me. And you know what I say? I say, "I don't understand that." There's a verse in John 15 that I don't understand. It seems to contradict what I believe. But I just say, "I don't understand it," because I've got a dozen verses that tell me why I believe what I believe. If you've got fifty verses that are clear, and one that you just can't figure out, don't get all messed up on one verse when you've got fifty that are clear. And don't take the Bible and make it say something it doesn't say.

Now, that's quite a bit of explanation before I cover II Corinthians 5:10. But here's what the verse says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one (Every one!) may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Now, Baptists like to say, "If you get saved and you sin, and plead the blood it'll never come up again." I'm not too sure about that. Here's what I want you to understand: saved and secure—yes...but, no problem if you sin? That's not true. You're going to have to give an account at the judgment seat of Christ. You and I need to understand we're going to stand before the Lord Jesus Christ and we're going to answer. And we need to understand that. Now, what we do...what a lot of Baptists do...is they'll take passages aimed at Israel, and they'll talk about verses that

say something about your sins being cast into the sea and he remembers them no more. And they'll take verses about them being as far as the east is from the west, and he remembers them no more, and they'll apply them to the Christian life. Just be careful with that thing. If you sin, don't think there'll be no consequences of that sin. You reap what you sow. There are consequences to that sin—even when you get forgiveness. Do you understand what I'm saying? God may forgive me for slapping my wife, but there are going to be some consequences. Amen? And God may forgive me for saying something untrue about Bro. Buddy, but there are going to be consequences. And I just don't believe when you get to the judgment seat of Christ that you're going to walk up there and say, "Hey, right before I died I pleaded the blood; I got it all fixed. It's all right now." I don't believe it's going to be that easy. This verse says you're going to give an account. I believe you're going to give an account. And so, II Corinthians 5:10 is what I want to give to you as a balance to "Security of the Believer/Once Saved, Always Saved." Yes, it is true—you're saved and saved forever. Thank God for that, amen? But the fact that you can sin and get away with it is just not true. You're not going to be able to get away with sin.

Now, take your Bible and turn back to Colossians. And turn to chapter one for just a moment. We're sort of just doing a little bit of review here for a moment. Look at verse twelve. The Bible says, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath (What's the next word?) delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath (What?) translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:" When you got saved, you literally got translated. Now, your body hasn't been translated yet. We call it the rapture. One of these days the body's going to be translated. Either this body's going to be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—Thank God for

that!—or when God raises up that seed in that grave...There's a seed to this body and God's going to raise it up. Every body has a seed—I Corinthians 15. There are different kinds of bodies. There are celestial bodies the Bible says over there in I Corinthians 15. Your physical body has some kind of seed. And when you go to the grave most of this body goes back to the dust. There's some kind of seed there. When God raises that thing up, it's going to be a body like Jesus Christ's body. People say, "What about all those people that got blown to smithereens in a space shuttle or something like that?" God will have no problem preserving, resurrecting, or giving them a new body. God has no problem with that. God knew more about DNA five thousand years ago than the scientists do right now. God understands it. God's got it figured out. I wonder how. I wonder who enlightened him. I wonder who told God how this all works. Do you understand what I'm saying? God's going to have no trouble getting you a new body. You already are right now seated in the heavenlies according to Paul because you are somehow (People call it mystically—it's spiritually.) united with Jesus Christ. He's the head, and you're a member of his body. Ephesians 5 says "flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones." I am one with Jesus Christ. Amen? And I'm thankful for that.

Now, with those things in mind, let me just remind you that what we don't believe that salvation is being born again and again and again. Once you're born again you can't be unborn. I've been born again; have you been born again? That's a spiritual operation, a spiritual work; and you can't be unborn. And so we don't believe that it's getting saved and then lost and then saved and then lost and then saved. No, we believe that once you've been born again, you are one with Christ. You're saved and you're going to heaven. John 5 says that the believer "hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation." Philippians 1 says, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a

good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” The Bible says God’s going to finish what he started. And you got saved, and God’s going to finish it. II Timothy 1:12 “I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.” It’s God being able to keep your soul; it’s not your being able to keep your salvation. God keeps your soul; God protects you. God holds you in his hand; and if you lose your salvation, God would have to say, “Whoops! I didn’t mean to do that.” How many of you believe God’s ever going to say that? If you lose your salvation, God would say, “How did that happen?” God’s not going to say that. For you to lose your salvation God would have to say, “Oh, no, Satan got me that time.” It’s not going to happen. It’s all about him. I like the fact that in the Old Testament there is a phrase over and over again—“Salvation is of the Lord,”—where it talks about his salvation. You know I’m saved, but you know why I’m saved? Because it’s his salvation. He saved me. Now, if you can work to get to heaven; you mark it down; you can work to get to hell. I’m not working to get to heaven. I’m trusting Jesus Christ to get me there. And that’s why I am eternally secure.

Now, one of the things that make all of that possible is this spiritual circumcision. And this is something that just, unfortunately, is not taught in a lot of places; and you and I need to understand it. So take your Bible and turn to I Thessalonians chapter five, and let’s talk about it. Now, we’re caught up now. That’s the review. I remember the first time I ever heard this. It’s like the first time I ever heard that Hebrews 6 was not written to a Christian in the age of grace. When I got saved I studied Acts 2, and I said, “There’s something wrong here; that doesn’t match my doctrine.” And then I got to Hebrews 6, and I faced the same thing. I went to my pastor and I said, “That says you can lose your salvation.” And my pastor said, “Well, now what that means is…” And he corrected the Bible. And

then I went to the guy that led me to the Lord and I said, “Can you explain that to me?” And he said, “Well, what that means is...” And then he corrected the Bible. And I literally—I guess some of them thought I was a smart aleck—would go to some of my professors in Bible college, a Baptist Bible college, and say, “Can you explain that verse to me?” “Well, in the Greek...” Well, I’m not looking at Greek; I’m looking at English. What does it mean in English? You know? People say, “Speak English to me.” That’s the way I felt. Now, I showed respect to them. I didn’t get smart aleck-y with them, but I said, “What does that mean?” And I’d get, “Well, in the originals...in the Greek...” And all they were doing was correcting the Bible to fit their doctrine. Well, then as years went by and I studied my Bible and got some direction on some things, I remember the first time (or about the first time) I ever heard of this idea of a spiritual circumcision, and I thought, “Boy, that’s far fetched.” And it dawned on me at one time that God is far fetched. He just doesn’t do things like we do things. His ways are not our ways. His thoughts are not our thoughts. God is so big and so grand and so glorious. One of these days we’re going to get to heaven, and God’s going to let us look back with his eyes and see what happened when we got saved. And then we’re going to appreciate it. And the more I learn about my salvation...I get tickled at these people trying to lead somebody to the Lord, and they want them to understand the dragon’s head in the book of Revelation, or they want them to understand the iron toe in the book of Daniel or something. I don’t know why they think people have to understand everything to get saved. You know what you have to understand to get saved? You have to understand that you’re lost and on your way to hell, and you need a Savior. And if you’ll trust Jesus Christ, he’ll save you; and then he will. But you know what? As I’ve grown in the Lord, I know more about my salvation now than I did when I got saved. And when I read my Bible I see some things that God did when I got saved. And when

the light comes on, you begin to appreciate salvation. And I remember Colossians 2, getting a hold of this thing (first of all I Thessalonians 5:23) and saying, “Wow! That’s tremendous.” And it is. So, I hope you’ll get a little bit of that today. And even though most of you already know it, I hope you’ll get sort of a renewed appreciation for it. The Bible says this in I Thessalonians chapter five verse twenty-three, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; (w-h-o-l-l-y) and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” You are a triune being; you’re a trichotomy.

Take your Bible and turn to Genesis and I John 5. I’ll show you what I think is real exciting in Genesis. God said over there in Genesis, “Let us make man...” Who’s he talking to? God talks to himself; did you know that? How many of you ever talk to yourself? You’re like God. You know why? You’re a triune being. I like that verse in the song that says, “Me thinks...” And people will say, “Soul,” and they’re talking to themselves. Or they’ll say, “Oh, my soul.” Don’t they say that? You have a soul, you have a spirit, and you have a body. In the Bible it’s spirit, soul, and body. Look at I John 5 first of all. God is a triune being, and you’re made in his likeness. You’re made in his image. I John 5:7 says, “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word...” That’s a capital “W.” That’s Jesus Christ—I wish every body would do this—if you’re going to write something about the word of God, make it a small “w.” Now, if you write “the Bible” you can make it a capital “b” if you want to or even “Scripture” if you want to make it a capital ‘s’, though the Bible doesn’t—it’s a small “s.” But when you’re writing something and you say, “The word of God says...” make it a small “w” and if you’re talking about Jesus Christ make it a capital “w.” That is how the Bible distinguishes the two. And here it’s talking about Jesus Christ, so it says in verse 7, “...there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father,

the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are (What?) one.” All right, do you believe that? People say, “I don’t believe in the trinity.” Right there it is. Now to say “I don’t believe it,” and “I don’t understand it,” are two different things. I don’t understand it either. There are some things I don’t understand about the trinity. I’m thankful that God (Boy, this is almost sacrilegious. This is heresy to most Baptists,) has allowed me to stand up and say, “Jesus Christ was God, but he wasn’t God the Father.” Baptists think that’s heresy when you say stuff like that. They say, “Jesus was all God.” Well, Jesus slept; God the Father doesn’t sleep. Jesus got hungry; God the Father doesn’t get hungry. Do you understand what I’m saying? But they’re still the same. They’re still one. You say, “I can’t understand that.” Neither can I. I don’t understand all that; I just believe what the Bible says. And so, Jesus Christ is literally the body of God. God the Father is the soul, and the Holy Ghost is the spirit. You have a triune being. God is a trinity. And he said, “Let us make man in our image after our likeness.” So, God made you with three parts. You have a spirit; you have a soul; and you have a body.

Now turn to Genesis chapter one. Look at verse twenty-seven. Now you may wonder what this has got to do with “Security of the Believer.” But I think it’ll become clear in just a moment. And a lot of you already know this. I understand that, but I love the Bible. I just love looking at some of this stuff over and over again. Now, I just got through saying, and you can see it down there in verse twenty-six; God said, “Let us...” Now, there isn’t a man on the face of the earth and God’s talking to somebody. He says, “Let us...” And he’s talking to somebody. And he said, “Let us make...” So, he’s talking to somebody that’s going to help him make something. And so it’s not the angels. It’s not the sons of God. They were there, too, at the creation. This is God talking to himself. He’s talking to the Son. He’s talking to the Holy Spirit, evidently. You

look at this...verse twenty-seven. I want you to just see how God does this. “So God created (Count the times that’s in this verse.) man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” How many times is the word “created” in there? Three times...I wonder why. Because he’s making a soul; he’s making a spirit; and he’s making a body. He’s going to make you a triune being just like he is. He’s going to make you after his image. As a matter of fact, that’s in verse twenty-seven. That’s three times three times three. The next time you find it is in 2:7. Again three times three times three. And in verse seven of chapter two it says, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” And that verse has twenty-seven words—which is three times three times three. And then you come to chapter five and again God decides I’m going to tell them again. So in chapter five the Bible says (Notice again.) chapter five verse one, “This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God (What?) created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were (What?) created.” God put “created” in there three times again. You’ve got three accounts of God creating man. I wonder why there are three. In two of them he uses the word “created” three times. One of them is in verse twenty-seven...three times three times three. One of them is in 2:7; it has twenty-seven words. You think all that’s an accident? That’s pretty phenomenal if you ask me. What’s God trying to show you? He’s trying to show you something about what it means to be made in his image. You and I are made in his image; we have a body, we have a soul, and we have a spirit.

Now take your Bible and turn to Luke 23. Now to me this is exciting. All right, now look at Luke twenty-three verse forty-six. Jesus is on the cross. “And when Jesus had cried

with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my (body...Is that what he said? Into thy hands I commend my soul...Is that what he said? What did he say?) spirit..." So when he died, where did his spirit go? It went up. It went to be with the Father. What happens when you die? Paul the apostle said, "To be absent from the body..." Right? You know what? One of these days you're going to be absent from this mess. That ought to make you want to shout. You know one of the greatest things that's ever going to happen to you? You're going to dump this thing right here. You're going to get rid of it. You say, "I don't want to get rid of it." That's your problem. I want to get rid of it. And Jesus said, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit..." Well, where'd they put his body? They put it in a tomb. He's got a body in a tomb; he's got a spirit with the Father. Where's his soul? Turn to Acts chapter 2.

In Acts chapter two...let's pick it up in verse twenty-five. The Bible says, "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." The "Holy One" of course is the Lord Jesus Christ. Now look at the explanation. The Holy Spirit tells you what David's talking about in verse thirty-one. He tells you what David was referring to. "He (talking about David) seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of (Who?) Christ, that his soul (Whose soul? The Lord's soul...Christ's soul) was not left (Where?) in hell." And then it goes on to say, "Neither his flesh did see corruption." When does corruption take place? After three days. How do you know that? The tomb of Lazarus. He stinketh. Jesus waited a certain amount of time because the body starts taking corruption after a certain number of days. And Jesus waited long enough for them to make sure he

was good and dead. And Jesus went over there, and it was sure enough a resurrection of a corrupted body. Why? It's a picture of us. This corruption shall put on? Incorruption. This mortal shall put on? Immortality. Understand what the Bible's trying to show you there. We won't cover that this morning. But the Bible says of Jesus Christ, "His soul was not left in hell..."

All right, take your Bible and turn to Matthew 12. Now, I want to tell you what the Bible says, not what Baptists say. Here's what the Bible says...His spirit went to be with the Father, his body went to the tomb, and his soul went to hell. You say, "Why did his soul go to hell?" For you! And for me! And took all that sin there—the Bible says he bore our sins on the cross. Jesus Christ took the sins of the world and dumped them in hell. But there's another reason he went to hell. Now, let's put all this together. Look at Matthew 12:40. Jesus Christ is talking. They ask him for a sign up there in verse thirty-eight. They say, "We want a sign." He said in verse thirty-nine that an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign. He said, "I'm not going to give you a sign—except for one sign, the sign of the prophet Jonah," there in verse thirty-nine. Now, watch what he says in verse forty. "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the (What?) heart of the earth." Is a tomb the heart of the earth? That's a deep tomb, isn't it? No, his body was in the tomb; he was in the heart of the earth as who? Jonah.

So turn to Jonah chapter two. Let's see where Jonah went. Let's see if we can believe the Bible. Some people can't believe the Bible. Turn to Jonah. First, chapter one verse seventeen. "Now the Lord had prepared a (What?) great fish to swallow up Jonah." Now the Lord prepared that fish. I wonder what he did. Filleted it? What does God do when he prepares a fish? He's making a fish here that's going where no fish has ever been. It's a special fish.

Look what the Bible says. “(He) prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish’s belly, And said I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; (Look at Jonah 2:2.) out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice.” Jonah said, “I cried out of the belly of hell.” You say, “Well, I don’t believe he went to hell.” I do. Where’s hell at? It’s at the heart of the earth. You say, “Well, that was just the fish’s belly.” Well, okay, let’s go ahead and look at verse five, “The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; (That’s quite a ways down there, isn’t it? Watch this...) the earth with her (What?) bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God.” He said, “I went to the bottoms of the mountain,” and he said, “There were some bars around me.” Now when you think of bars, what do you think of? You think of a prison.

All right, take your Bible and turn to Ephesians chapter four. You say, “Bro. Ron, this sounds weird.” You’ve been watching too much TV. If you’d turn off the sci-fi channel you’d find something interesting in the word of God. You don’t need the television when you’ve got stuff like this. According to the Bible, Jesus said, “I’m going to go down to the heart of the earth, just like Jonah did. Jonah said, “Out of the belly of hell cried I.” And he said, “I went down there to the bottoms of the mountains and there were some bars around me.” Special fish! Look at Ephesians chapter four verse seven. Let’s see what it says, “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, (Where do captives stay? Behind bars. The Bible says, Jesus led captivity captive. Now, bear with me.) and gave gifts unto men.” Now, look at verse nine. The Holy Spirit adds this. “(Now

that he ascended [Jesus ascended], what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" That's a long way down there. That's deeper than a tomb. What did he do before he went up? He went down. With man, what goes up must come down. And with Jesus, what goes down must come up. Amen. He went down first to the lower parts of the earth and led some captives out of there. He led captivity captive.

Take your Bible and turn to I Peter 3. Look at verse eighteen. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, (Why?) that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by (What?) the Spirit: (And that's the Holy Spirit.) By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in (Where?) prison..." Now, that's a spirit that's in prison. You say, "Whoa! I thought the spirit went up." Not before the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. A whole different ballgame before that! Paul said, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord."

Let's go to I Samuel 28. I love this story. It's one of my favorite stories in the Bible. The reason it's one of my favorite stories is because there's something in here that the Bible doesn't tell you, but I'm convinced it's so. And so go to I Samuel chapter twenty-eight. Look at verse six. The Bible says, "And when Saul inquired of the LORD, the LORD answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor." So, the old movie called "Bewitched"—her mother was Endora. Wonder where they came up with that name? I'm going to tell you something: the devil's home base is Hollywood. Saul disguised himself—this is the first Halloween. He's disguising himself and looking for a witch. That's what it says. Right there, he disguised

himself in verse eight. And go down here to verse eleven. “Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring (What?) up unto thee? (You want me to bring somebody up? You want me to bring the dead up? Why don’t you bring them down? Cause there not up there. Who do you want me to bring up?) And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice...” Why? She didn’t have the power to bring up Samuel, but God said, “You all want to see something funny? You all see this fool down there talking to that witch thinking she can bring up Samuel? Let’s do it and see how she reacts. And she calls Samuel up...AAAHHH! God played a trick on her. And there’s Samuel standing in front of her. Look at verse twelve. “...the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth.” Out of the earth—it almost sounds like Revelation. I believe the demons and devils know some things you don’t know. And there’s something coming up out of the earth over there in the book of Revelation. “...he said unto her, (in verse fourteen) What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself. And Samuel said to Saul, (Look what he says.) Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? (Samuel came up.) And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? And the LORD hath done to him, as he spake by me: for the LORD hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbor, even to David: Because thou obeyedst not the voice of the LORD, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon

Amalek, therefore hath the LORD done this thing unto thee this day. (Now watch this.) Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me...” Is Samuel saved or lost, you think? You think Samuel is one of God’s? I do. Then why does he say Saul’s going to be with him. Because down there (before the crucifixion) is where the lost and the saved went. And there’s a great gulf between them. But they are all down there. Now the exception would be Enoch. And the exception would be Elijah. Why? Enoch’s a picture of the Christian that never dies. Right? A Christian that’s alive when Jesus comes back. And Elijah’s a picture of the tribulation saint—going to get his head chopped off. Elijah never died, did he? And he’s going to come down here according to Revelation chapter eleven and get his head chopped off. And so everybody believes that Elijah’s up there begging the Lord not to sound the trumpet. He has to come down here again. How would you like to go to heaven then have to come back down here? That’s why Paul was suicidal; he’d got a taste of heaven. He didn’t want to come back down here. He said, “I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.” Now, if you got a taste of heaven, a movie wouldn’t move you one inch. You wouldn’t want to come down here for anything. There’s nothing that would appeal to you down here.

Now, what’s the point? The point is there’s a prison down there. And all the Old Testament saints were down there, and Jesus Christ went down there and preached to them and led captivity captive. He applied the blood. The Old Testament saints weren’t secure like we are. They didn’t have the blood of Jesus Christ. Why? It hadn’t been shed. And the blood of bulls and goats can never take away sin, so they couldn’t get their sins redeemed. All they got was forgiveness. And they got their sins put on hold. And when Jesus died he went down there and applied the blood. You say, “I’ve never heard anything like this before.”

Read your Bible. You realize how many people have never even considered this material? I'm not saying I've got any great insight, because I don't. But I'm going to tell you something: the Bible will help you to understand and to see some things. So, the Old Testament saints went to Abraham's Bosom, and the Old Testament lost people went down there to a place—a compartment, call it what you want, but I know this: the Bible doesn't say that hell is the final resting place. Or death. Revelation says death and hell both are cast into the lake of fire. So there are some things going on down there that we don't understand. And when you got saved, God cut your soul loose from your body. Your soul is shaped just like this body. Your soul has eyes; your soul has ears; your soul has a nose; your soul has a mouth. Your soul has a memory. Your soul is shaped just like this. And that's probably a good possibility of why somebody that gets their hand chopped off—arm cut off—every now and then, they'll feel something itching. And they'll scratch it. You know why? Because you're Casper the friendly ghost. And all this is, is a sheet. And inside is the real you. And in the Old Testament it was attached. And so when they sinned they'd go to the priest; and they sinned and they had to go to the priest—sin and go to the priest. Die—go to hell. Hell's not the lake of fire. Go to a compartment down there...go to a place down there. I don't understand all this, but they went down. And when Jesus came and applied the blood, he fixed it. And God said, "I'm sick and tired of this mess." I'm telling you—God got sick and tired of the whole thing. You just read the Old Testament—he said, "I've about had it with this mess." He said, "Every time you mess up I whip you and you get right. Then you mess up again, and I'll whip you, and then you'll get right...I'm sick of it." And God said, "I'm going to fix it finally and forever. When I get my blood on you...I'm going to apply the blood and I'm going to cut that umbilical cord." It's a spiritual umbilical cord. And when God cuts your soul loose from your body, whatever you do in this

body does not affect your soul. Now you ought to thank God he did that for you. Why did he do that? Because if you could have lost your salvation you would have—if it was left up to you. If God saved you and then left you to your own self, you'd have made a mess. So Jesus comes up out of the grave, and he says, "Touch me and handle me. I have flesh and bones." The Bible says in I Corinthians 15, "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God." You're not going up in this body; you know why? Flesh and blood can't go up. It's flesh and bone. And so you're going to leave here in a glorified body—a resurrected body, a new body—and it's going to be flesh and bone. What's in the veins? What's pumping through you? I don't know. Either probably water—pure water, eternal water cause there's a river of life up there that somebody has to drink. We don't; we received it when we received Jesus Christ. We have the River. I have the River flowing in me right now. I got eternal life in me. So you'll probably have pure water in your veins, or you'll have liquid gold. That's my guess. I don't have a clue. But you're not going to take that blood you've got with you. You know why? It's contaminated. And it's what makes this body function. What happens if they take your blood out? You're dying, aren't you? And so Philippians 3 is where we'll close.

Let's go to Philippians 3. Now this also explains some things if you want to study it—I can't cover all this in one lesson. But Jesus comes up and some of the women came over to him; they wanted to put their hands on his feet; they wanted to worship him; they wanted to kiss his feet. And he said, "Touch me not; I've not yet ascended." He said, "I haven't gone up yet." Don't touch me. I guess it would've killed them. I've studied that thing—what would've happened if they would have touched him. He said, "You can't touch me yet; I've not gone up." I don't know why or how all that works, but just a few hours later on the same day, some people came up to him and he said, "Touch me. Handle me. Feel me. See." Well, what does that mean? It

means he went up and came back. You think God can go to heaven and back in an hour? I mean can you imagine someone saying, “Where are you going, Lord?” “I’m going to go down there and visit planet Earth.” “When are you going to be back?” “In a minute.” Is God able to do that? I mean we have a big God, don’t we? Now the Bible says in Philippians 3:20, “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” I don’t understand it all, but I know this: when you got saved, God fixed you—permanently—and you’re going to be conformed to the image of his Son. And the image of his Son is a triune being. And you’re going to have a body, a soul, and a spirit. And you’re going to be like Jesus Christ, and that means you’re going to be able to travel at the speed of thought. That means that you’re going to be able to move from planet to planet. The Bible says, “That of the increase of his kingdom there shall be no end.” Do you realize you’re not going to go to heaven, sit on a cloud, and play a harp for all of eternity? God is going to inhabit the universe. And if Adam would not have messed up, and if Eve would not have messed up; that’s what he was going to do the first time. But they messed up and God had to fix the problem. And he just took six thousand years to do it. You say, “That’s a long time.” Compared to eternity, how long’s six thousand years? Yeah! I mean—you know—I’m sure you’ve heard the joke: the guy gets to heaven and says, “What’s a million dollars like in heaven?” And God says, “Well, a million dollars in heaven is like a penny.” And the guy said, “Well, what’s a million years like?” And he said, “A million years is like a minute.” And he said, “Well, can I have a penny?” And the Lord said, “In a minute.” I mean how long is a minute; how long’s time to God? So he takes a six thousand year detour, big deal! What’s that to God? It’s nothing. It’s absolutely nothing. And boy when I look

at this and I see that what God did for me at eighteen years of age is something transpired in a bedroom. I was on my face—laying on my face—begging God to save me. And God performed a surgery and said, “I’m going to fix him.” I’ve been fixed ever since. He’s not going to unfix it. God doesn’t have to unfix it. He fixed it.