

Teaching Orthodoxy...using Bible Verses Lesson 15

FINAL LESSON IN THIS SERIES

We can *fail* and *fall* away from God. Don't *drift* away from Jesus. At the Last Judgment, God will reward (render) each one according to his works.

A person can fall away from God, if they neglect the salvation given to them IN Christ.

The Protestant "once saved, always saved" theology is not Biblical. Therefore, we must be serious minded and sober, lest we "**fail of the grace of God.**" Judas **failed**, and he had been an **Apostle**, taught by Jesus personally. Jesus did not cast Judas out...but Judas cast himself out, and despairing of any hope of forgiveness and salvation, he went and hanged himself.

Jesus promised that "whoever comes to Me I will never cast out." John 6:37

But **what happens if we choose**, like Judas, to walk away from Christ? What happens **if we** get lazy and **stop coming to Christ**, stop coming to Holy Confession, stop coming to Holy Communion, stop coming to Church, stop coming to God in prayer? We could **drift away** and **be lost eternally...by our own choices** and spiritual laziness.

For some have already turned aside after Satan. 1 Timothy 5:15

This you know, that **all those** in Asia **have turned away from me**, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. 2 Tim. 1:15

And Jesus said unto him, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and **looking back**, is fit for the kingdom of God". Luke 9:62

¹ We must pay closer attention, therefore, to what we have heard, **so that we do not drift away**. ²For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every transgression and disobedience received its just

punishment, ³**how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation**? Hebrews 2:1-3

See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that **turns away from the living God**. Heb. 3:12

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But you, O man of God, **flee these things** and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

1 Timothy 6:10-11

Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge – by professing it **some have strayed concerning the faith**. Grace be with you. Amen. 1 Timothy 6:20-21

Let us **hold fast** the profession of our faith without wavering; Heb. 10:23

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Heb. 6:11-12

Looking diligently lest **any man fail of the grace of God**; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. Heb. 12:15

Therefore, while the promise of entering His rest still stands, **let us fear** lest any of you should seem **to have failed to reach it**. Heb. 4:1

Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who **saved** a people out of the land of Egypt, **afterward destroyed those who did not believe**. Jude 1:5

Do not harden your hearts as in **the rebellion**, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where **your fathers tested Me**, tried Me, and saw My works forty years...And to whom did He swear that they **would not enter His rest**, but to those who **did not obey**? So we see that they **could not enter** in because of **unbelief**. Heb. 3:8-9, 18-19

"They shall not enter My rest." Since therefore it remains that some must enter it, and **those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience**. Heb. 4:5-6

Let us, therefore, **make every effort to enter** that rest, **so that no one will perish** by following their example of **disobedience**. Heb. 4:11

"Today, if you will hear His voice, **do not harden your hearts**." Heb. 4:7

And, "If it is **hard for the righteous to be saved**, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" 1 Peter 4:18

Alternate translation: [And if the righteous **scarcely be saved**, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? *King James Version*]

Children, how **hard** it is for those **who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God!**... With men it is **impossible**, but not with God; for **with God all things are possible**. Mark 10:24, 27

So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but **let us be awake and sober**....But since we belong to the day, **let us be sober, putting on faith and love** as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

1 Thess. 5:6,8

But the **end** of all things is at hand: **be ye** therefore **sober**, and **watch** unto prayer. 1 Peter 4:7

Be alert and of **sober** mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 1 Peter 5:8

Do not grumble against one another, **brethren**, **lest you be condemned**. Behold, the **Judge** is standing at the door! James 5:9

If we deliberately **keep on sinning** after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but **only a fearful expectation of judgment** and of **raging fire** that will **consume** the enemies of God. Heb. 10:26-27

For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, **walk as enemies of the cross of Christ**. Their **end is destruction**, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. Phil. 3:18-19

I sent him to know your faith, **lest** by some means the tempter had **tempted you, and our labor might be in vain**...For now we live, **if you stand fast** in the Lord. 1Thess. 3:5,8

To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work. Titus 1:15-16

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, **if they fall away**, to renew them again to repentance, since **they crucify again** for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. Heb. 6:4-6

For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and **bears herbs** useful for those by whom it is cultivated, **receives blessing from God**; but if it **bears thorns** and briers, it is rejected and near to being **curse**d, whose **end is to be burned**. Heb. 6:7-8

they **did not continue** in My covenant, and **I disregarded them**, says the LORD. Heb. 8:9

If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, **this one's religion is useless**. Pure and **undefiled religion** before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. James 1:26-27

For if these things are yours and abound, you will be **neither barren nor unfruitful** in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. Therefore, brethren, **be even more diligent to make your call and election sure**, for if **you do** these things you **will never stumble**. 2 Peter 1:8-10

Look to yourselves, that we **do not lose** those things we worked for, but that we **may receive a full reward**. 2 John 1:8

And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Matt. 3:10

Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Matt. 7:19

If anyone does not abide in Me, he is **cast out** as a branch and is **withered**; and they gather them and **throw them into the fire**, and they are burned. John 15:6

For if God did **not spare** the natural **branches**, He may not spare you either. Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, **goodness, if you continue in His goodness**. Otherwise you also will be cut off. Romans 11:21-22

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. 1 Cor. 9:27

Consider also that our Lord's patience brings salvation, just as our beloved **brother Paul also wrote you** with the wisdom God gave him. He writes this way in all his letters, speaking in them about such matters.

Some parts of **his letters** are **hard to understand**, which ignorant and

unstable people distort, as they do the **rest** of the **Scriptures, to their own destruction**. Therefore, beloved, since you already know these things, **be on your guard** so that you will **not be carried away** by the **error of the lawless** and **fall** from your secure standing. But **grow** in the **grace and knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. 2 Peter 3:15-18

The Last Judgment

Christ will **return in glory on Judgment Day** to separate the sheep (righteous) from the goats (damned) by whether they loved or not. Matthew 25:31-46

He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others. Luke 20:16

For we must all appear **before the judgment seat of Christ**, so that each of us may **receive** what is due us for **the things done** while in the body, whether good or bad. 2 Cor. 5:10

because you know that the Lord will **reward each one for whatever good they do**, whether they are slave or free. Eph. 6:8

Since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. **Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs**, and there is no favoritism. Col.3:24-25

Since you call on a **Father Who judges each person's work impartially**, live out your time as foreigners here in reverent fear. 1 Peter 1:17

¹⁴ We know that we have passed from death to life, **because we love** the brethren. **He who does not love his brother abides in death.** ¹⁵ Whoever **hates his brother** is a murderer, and you know that **no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.** ¹⁶ By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. ¹⁷ But whoever has this world's goods, and **sees his brother in need, and**

shuts up his heart from him, **how does the love of God abide in him?**

18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in **deed** and in truth. 1 John 3:14-18

... on the **day of wrath**, when God's righteous **judgment** will be **revealed**. For He will **repay** everyone according to **what** that person **has done**.

*[He will **reward (render)** each one according to his works].* Romans 2:5-6

I will not at this time do a Bible Study on the topic of the Antichrist and End Times.

I have already written a long article on that topic which is widely and easily available on the Internet:

“THE ANTICHRIST: AN ORTHODOX PERSPECTIVE FROM THE CHURCH FATHERS”

<https://orthochristian.com/106805.html>

I wrote this as a sermon series and preached it 20 years ago, in 2001, right after 911. Much later, the Russian Orthodox English-language *OrthoChristian* website posted online. I wanted my parishioners to be informed of our Orthodox Patristic view of the topic, lest they get sucked into the various Protestant misunderstandings of the topic, and further, lest they get into a we-don't-talk-about-that-attitude. But St. John Damascus in his famous catechism (“An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith”), and St. Cyril of Jerusalem in his well-known 4th century catechism, and St. Ephraim the Syrian in his very detailed End Times sermon showed me the truth...that we do have much Orthodox guidance on the topic of the End Times, the coming of the Antichrist and his 666 Mark--and this all has been printed in the most trusted of Orthodox catechisms for centuries.

So...for a self-guided Bible Study of that topic, please consult this link.
Everything is footnoted.

<https://orthochristian.com/106805.html>