

How to Never Fall
Part II
September 8, 2013
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2Peter 1:1-12

- 1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ:
- 2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,
- 3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:
- 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.
- 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;
- 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;
- 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.
- 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.
- 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for **if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:**
- 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- 12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth.

On the outset of today's message I really want us to see the content of the very first verse. Simon Peter; what a guy! We see from Verse one that Peter considers himself first a servant and then secondly an Apostle.

He is writing; not to a particular Church, not to the Jewish Christians, not to the Jewish nation; but rather simply to believers; any and all believers.

Throughout the epistle, it is very clear that the truths stated here apply to and are for the benefit of the saved; just look at these statements that identify them:

2Peter 1:1 ... to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the

righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ:

2Peter 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure:

2Peter 2:7 And delivered just Lot...

2Peter 2:8 ...that righteous man dwelling among them...

2Peter 3:1 This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

What we are reading is an epistle written by a fallen Christian (who was it that denied Jesus three times?) in which he uses the example of another fallen Christian, just Lot, the nephew of Abraham who chose to live in Sodom of all places; to teach all of us how NOT to fall like they did!

Let me say this just once; I trust that you are enough of a Bible student to know that Christians do not lose their salvation. When the Bible speaks of a Christian falling, it speaks of varying degrees of damage and destruction to the Kingdom and to ourselves and to those we love - brought about by the consequences of our sins.

It is common in Churches today for many Christians to be disqualified from positions of leadership because they have experienced

some particular failure in their lives; like divorce, for example. This is not the Biblical pattern or example, but rather, just the contrary.

Look at the scriptures and use your head as well. Who is the better guide? The guide who got lost but found his way back or the guide who has never been down that trail?

Peter has been down the trail he is teaching us about; he knows what he is talking about!

I've been down that trail too; I've been lost and I've found my way back as have many of you.

Here at Lighthouse, we don't throw you away or set you aside because of your past failures; this is still the home of 'another second chance'.

Back in April of 2011 the Lord sent us a priceless illustration to teach us how to never fall.

We know from our study of Biblical "spirinatomy" that we believers are a pure and righteous spirit living in an utterly corrupt tabernacle called our flesh.

The Bible calls our righteous spirit our new man and it calls our flesh our old man.

Success and failure in Christian life is nothing more complicated than which one of these we

(with our mind) choose and find the strength to follow.

Imagine a horizontal line across a blank sheet of paper. Below that line your old man rules your life. Above that line your new man rules your life.

Those who constantly waver and often fall away try to live their lives just above the line.

They want just enough of Jesus to stay off drugs. They want just enough of Jesus to be blessed financially. They want just enough of Jesus to feel good spiritually; at least at times.

They live on the edge of the line.

We all sin and fail God every day; (wavy line) sometimes in ways we consider minor and sometimes in ways we consider major.

God's advice is get off the line and start living at the top of the page. We call it things like "completely surrendering to the Lord", "becoming a living sacrifice", "giving God your all", "sold out to Jesus".

God calls it things like "holiness", "sanctification", being "fully persuaded".

Whatever you call it, when you are living down on the line, every time you sin it takes you below the line and puts you under the control of your rotten old flesh; thus you fall away and are easily swallowed up by the world.

When you are living way up here, “sold out to Jesus”, you can suffer even a substantial failure; confess your sin, get right with God and still **never fall** away.

In Part II today, the Lord is commanding us; yes, **commanding us** to do two things, two steps, two actions, so that we will never fall:

I. Get off the line!

A. This begins with making sure you are saved.

1. I know that most of you here today are sure of your salvation; we have taught you personally and thoroughly how to make sure.
2. Yet, not all. You are commanded right there in **2Peter 1:10** *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure:*
3. How do you do that? It is simple; you sit down with someone who knows how and let them show you in the Bible how to make sure.
4. If you will allow us the privilege of taking you through our five one hour Bible classes called Basic Bible Truths, you will never doubt or question your salvation ever again; you will know for sure you are saved.

5. You will never sit through another invitation bearing the guilt of your sin; Jesus will set you forever free!

6. Can I get a witness from those who have been through the classes?

B. Next, get about learning what God has called and equipped you to do.

1. The only thing that will give you victory over an overt sin in your life is to replace it with a Godly activity that you will love more than you did the sin!

2. Find your true calling and don't give up until you do.

3. Some would really like to do certain things for the Lord but are afraid to try. Try anyway!

4. Some want to do things the Lord has not called or properly equipped them to do. Do you really think you would be happier doing what you want poorly instead of what the Lord wants well?

5. Not everybody can preach; not everybody can lead music or play an instrument well; not everybody can teach; find what you do well to serve the Lord in your Church and don't quit until you do.

6. When you find it, not only will you be content and love it; you will be very good at it.

7. Then do it with all your heart!

8. Be the best there is:

The best teacher.

The best musician.

The best accountant.

The best bookkeeper.

The best greeter.

The best records manager.

The best youth leader.

The best old people's minister.

The best children's worker.

The best Basic Bible Truths teacher.

The best softball minister.

The best basketball minister.

The best administrator.

The best webmaster.

The best sound tech.

The best activities director.

The best outreach director.

The best community liaison.

The best preschool worker.

9. We need to get involved in Little League so that instead of losing families to it we gain them from it! And a hundred more ministry tools and opportunities that haven't even been invented yet!

10. Can you imagine what God is going to do in this place when we get off the line and give the Lord all we've got!

First, get off the line and second:

II. Live your life at the top of the page!

A. First of all, realize that if you are dissatisfied, discontent, vacillating or otherwise dipping below the line, it is not God's fault or the Church's fault or the preacher's fault; it's yours!

1. **Luke 4:4** Jesus said: ...**It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.**

2. The power of God has been placed at your disposal.

2Peter 1:3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

3. You have been given promises that will provide your every need.

2Peter 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

4. These promises are empty until you claim them by meeting their conditions.

5. God's power and promise covers 'all things that pertain to life and godliness'.

6. Marital, financial, social, business, provisional; you name it; God has a promise that covers it; but **you've got to act on it.**

B. There is given to us a list of practices that will keep us at the top of the page:

2Peter 1:5-7

5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

1. First on the list is **diligence**. It is the Gr. *spoudē*; it's where we get our word 'speed'.

It means 'get after it', don't procrastinate; translated by application it means 'start right now'!

2. Then add **virtue**. This Greek word means excellence. No more half hearted, no more mediocre; whatever we do we do with all our heart!

Colossians 3:23 And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

3. Next is **knowledge**. God commands you to become a true student of the Bible.

2Timothy 2:15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth

not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

But not just the Bible; you need an education in order to study the Bible.

4. Next is **temperance**. Self control; practicing moderation in all things. This can be really tough; we often need encouragement and accountability from each other.

5. Next is **patience**. I want patience and I want it right now! Patience is like forgiveness; we need to practice it toward others and for ourselves as well.

6. Next is **godliness**. This is holiness. It amounts to moving the righteousness Jesus placed on the inside to the outside as well.

7. Next is **brotherly kindness**. This is particular love for your brothers and sisters in the Lord.

8. And last, **charity**, or love. This is loving those in the world like Jesus in John 3:16. Caring where they are headed and being willing to do something about it.

In Conclusion:

It is interesting that these are to be added one to the other in a certain order.

If you just head out to love and reach lost sinners without the strength of character of these traits that come first, the world will reach you instead of you reaching the world.

Some of you really need to get off the line; too much of your life is centered in the world, and even though you think you are strong, it is just a matter of time until you or those you love are engulfed below the line and may never get back.

Peter knows what is coming; Lot could tell you what is coming; and I know what is coming. You really need to heed this good advice before irreparable damage occurs to you or especially to those you love.

We have begun some new Bible classes this week, but we still have room for you.

Why don't you see me after the service and let us have the privilege of sharing these amazing truths with you?