

AN ARGUMENT WITHOUT VALIDITY

By Eddy Gilpin

The doctrine of “Once Saved, Always Saved” is not taught in the Scriptures. Like all false doctrines it is the invention of man. Many arguments have been put forth in attempts to substantiate the doctrine. However, all fail miserably when compared with the Bible. One of these arguments is the subject of this brief article. The Bible gives the account of Simon the sorcerer as an example of one who so sinned after becoming a Christian that he was in a lost state.

We read of this account in Acts 8. In verse 13, the Scripture states: *“Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.”* Later, Simon is said by Peter (an inspired man) to be *“in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity”* (Acts 8:23) having a heart *“not right in the sight of God”* (Acts 8:21). He was instructed by Peter to *“Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee”* (Acts 8:22).

The argument often made by those who support the “Saved Once, Saved Forever” position is that Simon was never saved. They claim that his “belief” was not really “belief.” He did not really believe (they claim), or else he would have been saved and, therefore, could not have been in a lost state again. However, let us examine this thought a little more closely. In Mark 16:16, Jesus stated: *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.”*

Jesus used the word “believeth” (*pisteusas* in Greek) and the word “baptized” (*batistes* in Greek) in this passage. Those who so do, according to the words of Jesus, are “saved.” In Acts 8:13, the Bible states that Simon “believed” (*episteusen* in Greek) and “was baptized” (*baptistheis* in Greek). Notice, please, that except for the difference in the tense of the verb “believe,” the words used in these two passages are identical. What is the significance? The Holy Spirit (the author of Acts), used the exact words which Jesus used in Mark 16:16 for both belief and baptism.

Did the Holy Spirit know the heart of Simon? Absolutely! Did the Holy Spirit say that Simon “pretended to believe?” Absolutely not! The Holy Spirit (knowing the heart of Simon) stated that Simon “believed” and that he was “baptized” - the same words used by Jesus to instruct men what to do to be saved (Mark 16:16). The Holy Spirit had words at His disposal to state that Simon merely feigned belief in God; but, He did not use those words. He stated emphatically that Simon *episteusen* (“believed”).

Simon was also baptized. Having done such he was “saved” according to the promise of Jesus. After having done this Simon was then found in a lost condition, and this was related by Peter (one whom the Holy Spirit had likewise inspired).

Does the Bible teach that a person can be lost after having been saved? It certainly does; and Simon is a prime example of one who was. The doctrine of “Once Saved, Always Saved” is false. It is contradictory to what the Bible teaches. And, these two little words alone prove it be such.