

Salvation — How is it Gained? Once Gained, Can it be Lost?

Part Three

There are times when Jesus made some pretty strong statements. Here are two of them; Rev 2:9, 3:9.

2:9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and [I know] the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but [are] the synagogue of Satan.

3:9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

Whatever could Jesus have meant? We know there was tribulation and poverty in the early centuries. Christians were hounded and sometimes killed for their faith. The Romans and non-Christian Jews hated all Christians.

Rev. 2:9 The term “**Jews, and are not, but [are] the synagogue of Satan**” “no doubt refers to those who claimed to serve God, but actually served Satan”. Slander was used against Christians. “These Jewish centers became, literally, ‘synagogues of the accuser.’” [Ref. SDA Bible Commentary]

Rev 3:9 “Applied to the Philadelphia period of church history, this expression may be considered as applicable to those who do not keep pace with advancing truth and who oppose Christians who do. Thus understood, reference may be to the time when those who have rejected truth publicly confess their error (see GC 655)”. [Ibid.]

Are we just viewing history or is there an application for us today? We would that public confessions of error were done. One can't help but look at the folly of errors coming out of Questions on Doctrines, the continued teachings of Desmond Ford and the books of a new order¹ being published and sold saying we are saved in our sins instead of from our sins. One example of such a book, as suggested reading from an SDA pastor, is Roy Adams book; “The Nature of Christ: Help for a church divided over perfection” (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Assn, 1994). See the book review by another SDA pastor at www.ourfirmplatform.com - Written Articles, Paulson, Kevin.

Cannot you see there is division in our church? There cannot be two truths. One is error and to follow error is to be lost.

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“... The principles of truth that God in His wisdom has given to the remnant church, would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles . . . would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities, and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.” {1SM 204.2}

“Rev. 3:9 has also been applied to those who persist in their opposition to truth, particularly to the time when circumstances will compel them, though unrepentant, to acknowledge that those who have been loyal to truth are indeed God’s people. There is nothing to preclude the possibility that the statement of this verse may include both the repentant and unrepentant opponents of truth, with the one group making the acknowledgement in sincerity and the other only because circumstances compel them to do so.” [Ibid.]

Read with care the following quote. For leaders and ministers, it means not only your salvation but also those to whom the Lord has given you to lead into all truth. Yes, SDA pastors are here included, and even more so, because they should have known better.

“The minister who has sacrificed truth to gain the favor of men (*a good example is Questions on Doctrines*) now discerns the character and influence of his teachings. It is apparent that the omniscient eye was following him as he stood in the desk, as he walked the streets, as he mingled with men in the various scenes of life. Every emotion of the soul, every line written, every word uttered, every act that led men to rest in a refuge of falsehood, has been scattering seed; and now, in the wretched, lost souls around him, he beholds the harvest.” {GC 654.4} [Emphasis and (inclusion) is Mine]

“‘Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture! . . . Behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings.’ ‘Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, ye principal of the flock: for your days for slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; . . . and the shepherds shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape.’ Jeremiah 23:1, 2; 25:34, 35, margin.” {GC 655.2}

“Ministers and people see that they have not sustained the right relation to God. They see that they have rebelled against the Author of all just and righteous law. The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption. This is the view that now appears to those who rejected truth and chose to cherish error. No language can express the longing which the disobedient and disloyal feel for that which they have lost forever--eternal life. Men whom the world has worshiped for their talents and eloquence now see these things in their true light. They realize what they have forfeited by transgression, and they fall at the feet of those whose fidelity they have despised and derided, and confess that God has loved them.” {GC 655.3}

“The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. ‘We are lost!’ they cry, ‘and you are the cause of our ruin;’ and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God’s people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed.” {GC 655.4}

Bill Eichner