

## **PASTOR'S PAGE**

### **That's a Good Question: Once Saved, Always Saved?**

**by Chad Bird**

The acquisition of salvation, the giving of salvation, and the keeping of salvation are entirely dependent upon the Savior himself.

The Bible teaches two Biblical truths:

- 1) Once you are a believer in Christ, your salvation is forever secure in him.
- 2) Once you are a believer in Christ, you can later reject his salvation.

To us these truths may appear to be mutually exclusive. Either #1 is true or #2 is true, but they can't both be true. But Scripture teaches both. The tension between them is the tension of God's two words to us: the word of warning and the word of promise. Perhaps the best way to answer the question, Once saved always saved?, is by asking another question: Why do you want to know?

#### **The Heavenly Life Insurance Policy**

Why do you want to know? Maybe you view salvation as a heavenly life insurance policy. If you pay your premiums, then you're good to go. Upon your death, the benefits will accrue to you. Heaven's gates will swing wide to welcome you in. According to this view, it doesn't matter how you live or what you believe. Since you are baptized and once believed in Jesus, your eternity is secure. You can murder, steal, commit adultery, gossip, slander, hate. There's no need to pray, help others, be kind or generous or loving.

Once you're saved, you're always saved, right? God's hands are tied. He's got to stick by the contract. If that's why you're asking, then the answer of God's law is clear: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God," (1 Cor 6:9-10). Paul repeats the same stern warning in Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:5-6, and elsewhere.

You can reject his salvation. Believers can become unbelievers. They can spurn Christ and his benefits, live unrighteous lives, refuse to repent, lose the Holy Spirit, and fall from the faith. Do not be deceived. God is not mocked.

#### **The Heavenly Bank Account**

Or, why do you want to know? Maybe you view salvation as a heavenly bank account. According to this way of thinking, Jesus puts so much absolute cash in a spiritual bank account for believers. Each time they're sexually promiscuous, greedy, ignore the needs of their neighbor, or do anything wrong, there's a withdrawal. If they do too many wrong things, or not enough right things, they eventually deplete the bank account. God declares them bankrupt, takes his Holy Spirit away from them, and they lose all hope of being saved. The question is not can I lose my salvation, but can salvation lose me?

If that's why you're asking, then the answer of God's gospel is clear: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," (1 John 1:8). "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand," (John 10:27-28). "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus," (Rom 8:1). Once you are a believer in Christ, your salvation is forever secure in him. He is the Lamb slain for you from the foundation of the world. On the cross you were already pronounced forgiven of all your sins—past, present, and future. Nothing in all creation will be able to separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Your salvation in Jesus Christ is the most secure truth in the world.

## Once Saved, Always Saved? Wrong Question

“If a person is once saved, are they always saved?” is really the wrong question. Like the creation of the world, God’s reconciliation of the world is an irreversible fact. Both views—the heavenly life insurance policy and the heavenly bank account—are wrong for the same reason: they assume salvation has something to do with our performance. They assume (1) we can do all manner of evil and it won’t matter. Or they assume (2) we can do all manner of evil and it matters so much we are forever lost. Neither are right because both are focused on us. As if salvation were in some way dependent upon us. It is not. The acquisition of salvation, the giving of salvation, and the keeping of salvation are entirely dependent upon the Savior himself.

The question is not can I lose my salvation, but can salvation lose me? No, it can’t. All of us were justified, sanctified, and cleansed of all evil in the death and resurrection of Jesus. In other words, we were saved. The whole world. If it is finished for one, it is finished for all.

Like the creation of the world, God’s reconciliation of the world is an irreversible fact. We can’t out-sin, undo, or reverse it. Salvation can’t lose us.

Yes, we can refuse to believe it. Or later reject it. If we do, we’re tossing into the trash the invitation to Christ's dinner party. We’re dying of thirst neck deep in a lake of water. We’re rushing into hell, slamming the door, and locking it from the inside. Our lack of faith does not nullify the reality. It simply denies it. But God’s grace in Christ remains true. The truest, most beautiful good news in all creation. Jesus has saved you. You are loved. You are forgiven. You are righteous in him. All is right between you and God. In Jesus all God’s promises are Yes. Salvation cannot lose you. Once finished, always finished. Believe it. It’s yours.

Check out other writings by Chad Bird by googling 1517.org

Yours in Christ...Pastor Steele

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## **JULY/AUGUST MISSION OF THE MONTH – Lutheran Deaf Mission Society (LDMS)**

It is estimated that approximately ninety-eight percent of Deaf people in the United States do not attend church. This is, in part, due to the limited number of deaf churches. While the number of full-time pastors serving Deaf churches has decreased, the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod has seen an increase in the number of Deaf pastors, deacons, deaconesses, and lay leaders who use sign language to communicate the Gospel message. This has happened because of programs like Deaf Pah and the Deaf Institute of Theology. LDMS will engage in evangelism and Christian education training to help Deaf Persons and their families see Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and engage in stewardship and leadership training to help Deaf Persons serve Jesus Christ. To learn more, visit their website at [www.deafjesus.com](http://www.deafjesus.com)

### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

Sunday School: Begins Sunday September 12

All children ages 3 through 8<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to join us each Sunday morning from 8:45 – 9:45am. Please call the church office with any questions about Sunday School.

Adult Bible Study: Begins Sunday September 12

All adults and confirmed children are invited to join us in the church basement for Bible Study from 8:45 – 9:45am. See Pastor Steele with any questions about the Study.

## NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

July has been a busy month as things appear to be returning to normal. The Council takes a break in July due to all of the summer time activities, but there are still a few things to talk about.

Quotations for some technology upgrades were received and are being reviewed related to applying the Siebert Technology grant Bethany was awarded. More updates will be provided in the coming months.

The Board of Education has provided a plan to the Endowment Committee for the next two school years to support Bethany students who attend Lutheran schools. The fiscal year for reporting the endowment fund performance ends at the end of June, and the committee will make recommendations on the disbursements for this coming school year and next school year per the new Endowment bylaws approved in last November's Voter's Meeting. Many thanks to the Board of Education and the Endowment Committee for their work on this to assure funds are in place in September for the families who receive support.

The Board of Education is also searching for a Sunday School teacher to replace Kalia Yang starting in September. Kalia served for many years while her children were going through Sunday School. For the younger families whose children currently attend Sunday School, I ask that you prayerfully consider becoming a Sunday School teacher. It is a wonderful bonding experience with the children, and is so important to our future. Many thanks to Isabella and Annalise Hasler who have agreed to help with the pre-school aged children, and especially Gina Fibiger and Dori Matte who have faithfully served for many years as Sunday School Teachers.

Additionally, June and July are the months where the Council starts looking ahead to nominating new people for positions for the coming 2022 year. If you are interested in serving the church, please see Andy Fibiger or me about positions that will be coming available starting in 2022. There is a lot of work required to keep the church operating smoothly behind the scenes. I'm thankful for everyone who serves or has served in the past. It's a great way to connect with others in the congregation.

God Bless and to God be the Glory!

Todd Matte - Council President

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### **AUGUST BIRTHDAYS**

8-03: Debbie Perry  
8-06: Jim Herzog  
8-08: Judy Albert  
Daniel Menzer  
8-09: Harriet Tershner  
Dolores Gehrke



8-12: Lori Allmann  
Roxanne Taylor  
Charlotte Menzer  
8-13: Barbara Herzog  
8-15: Kieran Fibiger  
8-18: Sara Hasler  
8-25: Kyle Allmann  
8-27: Maggie Yang  
Conrad Hasler  
8-30: Julie Steele

### **AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES**

8-12: Andy & Gina Fibiger  
8-16: John & Laura Tershner  
8-18: Ray & Shirley Ottman  
8-23: Steve & Debbie Perry

If a birthday or anniversary has been missed, please contact the church office to let us know.

## **ALARIC FUNDRAISER UPDATE**

We are humbly grateful for the donations that have come in from our Bethany Family. We are also thankful to Pastor Steele and the Bethany Council for their generosity in matching \$1,000 of the members' donations. We would like to update you as to how the fundraising is going. Our fundraiser at the farm on July 10th raised \$3,000. Through church we have raised around \$2,680 with the matching funds. This last Saturday we had a bake sale at the Speed Show at the Fairgrounds and we raised \$265. Our total raised right now is \$5,945. The ultimate goal is to raise at least \$8,000-\$9,000 to cover the cost of the family to go on the train ride to Colorado and around the Grand Canyon. The Doctor has recommended the train ride out there for Alaric because he can sit when he needs to and get up and walk when he needs to. Any extra we raise will be used for meals. Again, we wish to thank the congregation for their generosity. Thank you to everyone for your continued prayers. We believe that only God knows the answer to how long Alaric will be with us. We continue to pray that God will guide the Doctor's to a new answer, one that will allow Alaric to be with us for as long as possible. ~The Family of Alaric Hazen

***\*If you would still like to contribute to Alaric's Fundraiser, you can do so until the end of August\****

### **\*\*\* 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Putt Fore Love Mini Golf Outing \*\*\***

**July 31 from 10am – 10pm at Harbor Pointe Mini Golf**



**18 Holes of mini golf  
Photo Booth  
Hole in One Contests  
Raffles  
Lemonade Stand and Slushies**



**All Proceeds benefit Love INC of Sheboygan County**

### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**



**Bethany's Annual Church Picnic  
Sunday, September 12  
11:00am – 3:00pm  
Bethany Lutheran Church**

*Food • Games • Prizes • Fellowship • Fun!*

**Sign-Up Sheets for attendance, donation needs, and volunteer opportunities are posted in the lower narthex at church. Please consider helping make this event a success!**

## **THOSE SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2021**

**Sunday, August 1**  
**9:00 a.m.**  
w/Holy Communion

Elder: Gerry Luebke  
Ushers: Hazens  
Acolyte: Cooper Marotz  
Scripture Reader: Lee Gumm  
Door Locker: Patrick Johnson

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**Saturday, August 7**  
**4:00 p.m.**

Elder: Jason Mengel  
Ushers: Jerry Sabrowsky, Derek MacKenzie  
Acolyte: Zakary Willadsen  
Altar Guild: Debbie & Steve Perry

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**Sunday, August 8**  
**9:00 a.m.**

Elder: Andy Fibiger  
Ushers: Dave & Sue Prange  
Acolyte: Madison Fibiger  
Scripture Reader: Steve Hazen  
Door Locker: Ken Thompson

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**Saturday, August 14**  
**4:00 p.m.**  
w/Holy Communion

Elder: Shua Yang  
Ushers: Ray & Shirley Ottman  
Acolyte: Aidan Brooks  
Altar Guild: Gina Fibiger, Rachel Johnson

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**Sunday, August 15**  
**9:00 a.m.**  
w/Holy Communion

Elder: Jason Mengel  
Ushers: Mattes  
Acolyte: Ryan Mengel  
Scripture Reader: Lexie Matte  
Door Locker: Dan Fibiger

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**Saturday, August 21**  
**4:00 p.m.**

Elder: Gerry Luebke  
Ushers: Thompson, Rademacher, Kuehlman  
Acolyte: Katelynn Regutis  
Altar Guild: Cindy & Gary Bartz

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**Sunday, August 22**  
**9:00 a.m.**

Elder: Andy Fibiger  
Ushers: Fibigers  
Acolyte: Winston Hasler  
Scripture Reader: Todd Matte  
Door Locker: Diane Marotz

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**Saturday, August 28**  
**4:00 p.m.**  
w/Holy Communion

Elder: Brian Faucher  
Ushers: Ben Marotz, Steve Marotz  
Acolyte: Maggie Faucher  
Altar Guild: Sue & Dave Prange

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**Sunday, August 29**  
**9:00 a.m.**  
w/Holy Communion

Elder: Lee Gumm  
Ushers: Brian Faucher, Dan Fibiger  
Acolyte: Isaac Hasler  
Scripture Reader: Sharon Werner  
Door Locker: Ryan Brooks

# August 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>01</b> 9am Worship w/HC	<b>02</b> 6:30pm Elders	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>07</b> 4pm Worship
<b>08</b> 9am Worship	<b>09</b> 5:45pm Bd of Ed 6:15pm Finance 7pm Council	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 4pm Worship w/HC
<b>15</b> 9am Worship w/HC	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 4pm Worship
<b>22</b> 9am Worship	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 4pm Worship w/HC
<b>29</b> 9am Worship w/HC	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				