

Today, we’d like to study the title of “Christmas & Communion Service” in *Matthew 1:21-23*.

To Online Word’s people, we’d like to suggest 3 Questions:

- Q1. What is Christmas and what would be your life without the birth of Jesus?
- Q2. What do you think of the long historical question of whether or not we can lose our salvation? What is more important thing than this question?
- Q3. How is Immanuel to us?

(1) Christmas – the birthday of Jesus

<p>Matthew 1:21-23 (Gabriel told Joseph)</p> <p>²¹ And she will bring forth a <u>Son</u>, and you shall call His name <u>JESUS</u>, for He will <u>save His people from their sins.</u>”</p> <p>²² So all this was done that it <u>might be fulfilled</u> which was <u>spoken by the Lord through the prophet</u>, saying:</p> <p>²³ “Behold, <u>the virgin</u> shall be with child, and bear a <u>Son</u>, and they shall call His name <u>Immanuel</u>,” which is translated, “<u>God with us.</u>”</p>	<p>21= His name Jesus (Jesus is His name: it means....), for He will <u>save His people</u> (Savior) from their sins (which are eternal death) (So, the name of Jesus means The Lord is salvation)</p> <p>22= it might be fulfilled which was <u>spoken by the Lord</u> (anointed by the Lord: Christ [Messiah]; the Lord = master); through the prophet (Isaiah)</p> <p>THEREFORE, Jesus + Savior + Christ + the Lord = the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior</p> <p>23= the virgin (Mary + conceived by the Holy Spirit, i.e., Jesus is a man + Jesus is God; a Son = the Son of God);</p> <p>Q3? Immanuel (“God with us”)</p>
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For Christians: Christ lives in each of us through the Spirit.

(John 3:5) “Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” ((1) Water: a symbol to wash off dirt, i.e., repent sins (unbelief) with God’s word - death of old life AND (2) Spirit: new birth of the Spirit)

(Romans 8:9) “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.” (The Spirit of Christ expresses that Christ dwells or lives in us through the Spirit.) So, there is IMMANUEL!

Therefore, Christmas is the birthday of Jesus. Celebrate Jesus’ birth. Christmas’ main character is Jesus, not Santa Clause. Q1. Without the birth of Jesus, we would be in the eternal death of sin. We would be in vanity.

(2) Jesus’ life on the earth

= preaching + teaching + healing (3 major ministries on the earth (Mat 9:35); for us,

preaching + teaching + praying for Jesus to heal ill people)
= Jesus' death on the cross with broken body & bloodshed (for us, proving His unconditional love)
(1st word on the cross, Luke 23:34) "Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots."
= resurrection the third day (victory over Satan's death power + His Spirit given to all Christians)

(3) Christians – all believers of Christ (Christ dwells in each believer through the Spirit)

When I was asked sometimes about whether or not we can lose salvation (after we are saved) as I had asked in a seminary, now I don't want to answer this tedious question between Calvinism and Arminianism through long church history. Here, salvation means "positional salvation," not progressive salvation (sanctification) or ultimate salvation (glorification). But their arguments had caused the loss of Agape love between two human thoughts by killing each other. Christians without love are nothing. Human thoughts (some say "lose" or "no lose") are irrelevant to All Scripture given by inspiration of God. The Holy Spirit, who dwells in us, teaches us all things in John 14:26, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you," through His instruments – some evangelists or some pastors and teachers. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 13:5, "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified (or unsaved)." That is the answer about the present state of indwelling Christ for salvation, not for losing salvation. The answer is between you and God, not between you and anybody. How many births do we need in the Bible? Bible tells us two (2) births, not more than two births, in John 3:3, "Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," (through repentance of the sins & the 2nd spiritual birth after the 1st physical birth from every mother's womb in its context & syntax, followed by water Baptism before other Christians in Acts 2:38). The Bible also says "salvation through faith alone" in Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast." **It is a bottom line that the Savior is only Christ, not any human beings.** But faith is unseen by anybody because of "the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Therefore, in God's sight, born-again Christians can't lose the salvation because He is omniscient, i.e., knows the faith in heart even in the future. But in human sights, we can say the born again Christians might lose the salvation because we can't see the faith but can tell the present faith through the present seen works, not the future.

So, if we are mature Christians, we shouldn't allege such a tedious position to destroy Agape love although we can think either position. BUT we should be an example which is willful practice of His Word, not forceful practice, in 1 Peter 5:3, "nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock." Then, we can see our faith through our works, not our assertion, in James 2:26, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." So we should be a good testimony of Christ through our works proving our faith.

Therefore, don't allege on either position because the Lord doesn't need our allegation—(1) secure salvation (not lose), because anyway we are saved or we have a winning ticket, we do whatever we want without practice of His word; we don't care about our daily relationship with God and with neighbors.; (2) lose salvation, because we just hold

on very minimal positional salvation state, we do whatever we want without practice of His word beyond the minimal requirement; we don't care about our daily relationship with God and with neighbors. Therefore, in either way, do not play games with God rather than let us keep naturally our daily relationship with God because of our so thankfulness for our salvation from eternal death, get very serious about the things of God or the things of the Spirit rather than material things or fleshly things, and then overflow Agape love to neighbors! Because of no Agape love, we called as Christians would be nothing! For instance, in Hebrews 6:4-6, the Bible says "For *it is impossible* for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,⁶ 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."

Arminianists say that those who fell away mean those lost salvation. It is impossible to renew them again to repentance. No third spiritual birth is allowed, sufficing the 2nd spiritual birth after the 1st physical birth. On the other hand, Calvinists say that those were not saved from beginning because "taste" is not enough for digestion which is salvation. We can think either or keep silence but should not allege either not to destroy Agape love, because without agape love we would be nothing and God doesn't need our allegation beyond what God says in the Bible.

Please note that (1) in the Bible, "lose salvation" or "secure salvation"¹ per se is not stated but either is made from interpretations of the Bible, (2) our thoughts are not really important to the Bible unless it is helpful for us to understand the Bible not in conflict, and (3) Our judgmental words against others are contrary to the Bible (James 4:11-12) and to Agape love (1 Cor 13:1-3).

I personally keep silence for this question because (1) the Bible per se doesn't state either, (2) the Savior is only Christ, not anybody; (3) it is an argumentative question to destroy Agape love; and (4) I keep on the present question whether or not Christ is in me for salvation toward be an example to the flock.

- (4) **Communion Service** = Memorial service of Jesus ("In Remembrance of Me" broken body + bloodshed, expressing His Agape love)

1 Cor 11:23-25 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread;²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."²⁵ In the same manner *He* also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me."

- (5) **Fellowship through Potluck** (by sharing our potluck as a token of Jesus' love; we have fellowship)

1 Cor 11:33-34³³ Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.³⁴ But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

¹ In the Bible, "lose" word is found 25 times but "lose salvation" is not found. "Secure Salvation" is once found in 2 Samuel 23:5 but it means "secure everlasting covenant for David's salvation" in its context and syntax, being different from the Calvinists' position of "secure salvation."

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