SOUND DOCTRINE FOR SPIRITUAL SUCCESS – Studies in Romans
A Guaranteed Salvation (Romans 4:16)

The age-old debate regarding the security of our salvation continues till now, and unnecessarily so. The first proof text presented to that effect in this epistle is found in Romans 4:16 –

"For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be GUARANTEED (emphasis added) to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. . ."

The most important word in the above assertion is "certain" (NASB) or "sure" (KJV). In the updated version of the NASB quoted above, it is rendered "guaranteed." It is the Greek word "babaios," and is used in several other places in the New Testament to speak of something steadfast and unalterable. Paul uses the word here to prove a point. The interrelationship which God has designed into His redemptive plan, consisting of a promise based on grace to be received by faith, guarantees that our salvation, once it is experienced through faith in Christ, cannot be lost. Every one of us is totally undeserving of being justified (declared righteous) in God's sight. It is a standing before God which we not only don't deserve, but cannot earn. SO, IF WE DON'T DESERVE IT AND CANNOT EARN IT, WHY WOULD WE THINK THAT WE CAN MAINTAIN IT?

Paul proves the former in Romans 3:19-26. But now, in Romans 4:16, he extends the benefit of the connection between promise, grace and faith one step further. If our justification cannot be earned by works, it also cannot be successfully maintained through works (4:13-15). Why? Any such attempt will inevitably produce a violation of the obedience which God expects from those who have exercised faith in the redemptive promise. To be sure, God will deal with those violations as our faithful Heavenly Father in disciplining us, in order to correct our behavior, as His children. But the ultimate guarantee of our salvation rests with the faithfulness of God in keeping His promise to save us, and not on our obedience as His children. If it rested with us, how could any of us be certain of our salvation? Yet Paul, in Romans 4:16, is telling us just that: we can be certain! Our relationship with Christ is guaranteed forever, established at the very moment of our justification, due to the interrelationship which exists between promise, grace and faith, designed within God's redemptive plan. This is why Paul could be so bold as to write this in 2 Timothy 2:13 – **"If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself."**

But now that you know of the certainty of your salvation and that it cannot be lost, here are some of the things that can and will be lost in the life of a follower of Christ, if he or she repeatedly and consistently sins against God:

>> The subjective assurance of your salvation (2 Peter 1:4-11)
>> Fellowship with your Savior (Revelation 3:14-21)
>> Usefulness in furthering the cause of Christ in our world (2 Timothy 2:20-21)
>> Your earthly life being chastened possibly to the point of death (1 John 5:16)
>> Being fully rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 John 7-8)