

Check It Out Tracts

JOHN 5:24 CHECK IT OUT By John W. White

PURPOSE

John 5:24 “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that **heareth** my **word**, and **believeth** on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from **death** unto **life**.” The purpose of this tract is to show that this verse is not dealing with the spirit salvation of Acts 16:30, 31, but with those who are saved and have been given ears to hear and eyes to see **the word** of the kingdom.

SALVATION

We need to understand that spirit salvation is not dependent upon our faithfulness to hear or to believe. **Romans 3:23** “For **all have sinned**,...” **Colossians 2:13** “And you, being **dead** [nekrov, 3498* spiritually] **in your sins**... hath he quickened ... having **forgiven** you **all trespasses**;” The word nekrov is used in two ways as shown in **Matthew 8:22** “But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the **dead** [nekrov - spiritually] bury their **dead** [nekrov - physically].” The question we should ask is “If we are spiritually dead, how can we be given spiritual life?” The Philippian Jailer asked the same question in **Acts 16:30-31** “... what must I do to be saved? **31**. And they said, **Believe** [aorist tense, an event not an on going process] on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” We receive that life as an event when we are born into the family of God and that life can never be lost.

INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

WORD, DEATH, AND LIFE: There are three nouns that are emphasized in this verse with the definite article **the** before them in the Greek text. The nouns are: **word** [logov, 3056*], **death** [qanaton, 2288*], and **life** [zwhn, 2222*]. **The word**, singular in number, is a particular word; **the death**, singular in number, is a particular death; and **the life**, singular in number, is a particular life.

EVERLASTING: The word **everlasting** is the adjective aijw>niov and the root word aijw>n which is a noun meaning **age**. The translators have translated this word in so many different ways that it has created great confusion as to what the word really means. This also has caused misinterpretation of many passages of scripture. They have translated these two Greek words: ever, everlasting, world, evermore, eternal, course, ... just to name a few. It is not easy to translate the noun **age** into an adjective that describes a person, place, or thing. Some translations of the Bible have used: agelasting, age-abiding, and age-during. The thought of eternity carries the idea of never ending. The word aijw>n does not carry this meaning. We have an example of this in **Matthew 24:3** "...the disciples came unto him ... saying, Tell us, ... what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the **end of the world** [age, singular, aijw>n?" The concept of eternity is expressed in the Greek but not as one word. Eternity is expressed in **Galatians 1:5** "To whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen." The phrase “ever and ever” is the way that eternity is expressed in the Greek. The text is as follows: eijs toux aijw>naw twa aijw>n, and translated “Unto the ages from the

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ages." Notice that the word **age** is in the plural. This is consistent throughout the New Testament.

HATH: The verb **hath** [eḗw, 2192*] is in the present tense and is in agreement with the present tense of the participles **heareth** and **believeth**. The primary meaning of this word is **to have**, or **to hold**. It also carries the meaning of to have in high **esteem** or **regard** as in **Matthew 14:5** "And when he would have put him [John the Baptist] to death, he feared the multitude, because they **counted** [eḗw, esteemed or regarded] him as a prophet." The following passages also support this meaning: Mark 11:32, Acts 20:24, Philemon 1:17. As long as one continues to hear and believe he will **hold in high esteem agelasting life**.

HAVE COME: The verb **have come** [eἰ̄comai, 2064*] is in the present tense and is in agreement with present tense of the participles **heareth** and **believeth**. As long as one is faithful he can be assured that he will not come into condemnation. The noun **condemnation** comes from the word **krisiv** which could be translated **to judge** or **judgement**.

"HEARETH... AND BELIEVETH"

John 5:24 "...He that **heareth** [aḗw, 191*] my word, and **believeth** [pisteuō, 4100*]..." The words **heareth** and **believeth** are both present active nominative participles. The present tense indicates that the action of subject **He**, the one hearing and believing, is continuous and thus implies faithfulness. Spirit salvation does not depend upon our faithfulness, but on whether or not we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ who died for our sins on the cross. Acts 16:30,31 This verse is dealing with those who are faithful in hearing and believing and what their portion will be because they have been faithful in hearing and believing.

"THE WORD"

John 5:24 "...He that heareth my **word**, ..." **Word** has the definite article **the** before it. **The word** is in the accusative case and singular in number. "The accusative signifies that the object referred to is considered as the point toward which something is proceeding: that it is the end of the action or motion described..." (p. 91***) In this case it is the implied action of the participle that is pointing toward **the word**. The definite article before **word** indicates it is a particular word. If the word was plural in number then this would probably indicate all of the words of Christ.

The word does not seem to be defined in the context. There are only five passages in the New Testament where **the word**, singular in number, and the present active singular participle, **heareth** occurs in the same verse. Those passages are Matthew 13:19, 20, 22, 23 and John 5:24. This narrows the search for the definition of **the word**, because it is defined in **Matthew 13:19** "When any one **heareth** [aḗw, 191,* present active singular participle] **the word** [toḗn logon, 3588 3056,* accusative singular] **of the kingdom** [thv basileiav, 3588 0932*]..." **The word** is defined in this verse as **the word of the kingdom**. Because of the present active participle **heareth** and the accusative singular of the phrase **the word** are common in both passages I am persuaded that **the word** in John 5:24 is **the word of the kingdom**. Because **the word of the kingdom** is associated with the parable

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of the sower, **the word** is doctrine that pertains to the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Because of this association we should look at the parable of the sower in more detail.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

The parable of the sower stimulates interest in **the word of the kingdom**. The parable of the sower is told in Matthew 13:3-8 and ended with Matthew 13:9 "Who **hath ears to hear**, let him **hear**." The word **hath** is a present active participle, "**one having**." The phrase **to hear** is a present active infinitive. The word **hear** is a present active imperative verb. The word **Who** implies that not all were included. What Jesus said in essence is that **some** of you have been given ears that can continually hear. Since you have been given these ears I command you to faithfully hear **the word of the kingdom**. If anyone has not been given ears to hear, the commandment to hear does not apply to him.

The **parable** of the sower was given to **stimulate questions** about the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven and not to make it plain. Jesus taught in parables to stimulate questions that only he could answer. He answered those questions in private to keep the meaning of His parables confidential. Because the meaning of parables were given in private clearly indicates that **the word of the kingdom** is not the simple plan of spirit salvation.

Matthew 13:10 "And the disciples came, and said unto him, **Why** speakest thou unto them in **parables**?" Jesus now is able to amplify what he meant in Matthew 13:9 with **Matthew 13:11** "He answered and said unto them, **Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given**." Because it is given to you to **know** the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, I have given you ears to hear this parable and **understand** it. Those who were not given ears to hear could hear the parables, and they did, but they could not **understand** the parable. **Matthew 13:13** "Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they **seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand**." Those who hear the word of the kingdom and were not given the ability to understand it will not be held accountable for it.

The parable of the sower illustrates how **believers are divided into two groups**. Those that **do not have ears** to hear nor the ability to understand parables (verse 19) and those who **do have ears** to hear and the ability to understand (verses 20-23). Those who have ears to hear and the ability to understand fall into three categories. The first group are those who **endure for a while** then are easily offended because of **the word of the kingdom** (verses 20-21). The second group are those who hear **the word** and endure the tribulation but they allow **the word of the kingdom** to be choked because of the cares of this world and riches (verse 22). The third group are those who endure tribulation, and do not allow **the word of the kingdom** to be choked for any reason; they are the ones who bear fruit (verse 23).

Every child of God has the ability to feed on the word. **1 Peter 2:2** "As newborn babes, desire the sincere **milk of the word**, that ye may grow thereby:" Not every child of God has the same capacity. **Hebrews 5:14** "But **strong meat** belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." **Hebrews 6:1** "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, **let us go on unto perfection**; ..." Not every child of God can go on to maturity because God will not allow them to do this. **Hebrews 6:3** "And **this will we do, if God permit**." God is merciful by hindering some from understanding strong meat because the more we understand the

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greater the responsibility to obey what we know. We see this in **Luke 12:47-48** "And that servant, which **knew his lord's will**, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. 48. But **he that knew not**, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever **much is given**, of him shall be **much required**: and to whom men have **committed much**, of him they will **ask the more**."

The **understanding** of the word of the kingdom is the key that keeps us hearing **the word**. The word **understand** is translated from the word sunibmi [4920*] which is a compound word with the words sun and ihmi. The word sun means *with* or *together*. the word i[hmi means *to send*. The Greek word for understand means to have the ability to put together the word of God. There are those who are continually hearing and "Ever learning, and **never able** to come to the knowledge of the truth." **2 Timothy 3:7** The word **knowledge** is the Greek word epignwsiv which means knowledge upon knowledge. The principle of this knowledge is found in **Isaiah 28:9-10** "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to **understand doctrine**? *them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.* 10. For precept *must be upon* precept, precept **upon** precept; line **upon** line, line **upon** line; **here** a little, **and there** a little:" This is the teaching method of the Holy Spirit. **1 Corinthians 2:13** "the Holy Ghost teacheth; **comparing spiritual** things with spiritual."

"HATH EVERLASTING LIFE"

John 5:24 "...He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, **hath everlasting** [agelasting] **life** ..." The verb **hath** is the Greek word e]cw which is singular in number and in the present tense and is in agreement with the present tense of the singular participles **heareth** and **believeth**. The word e]cw in this context carries the meaning of **having or holding in high esteem**. We do not **receive** agelasting life until the next age which is the millennial age. This is confirmed in **Mark 10:30** "He shall receive...in the **world** [age] to **come** [the one coming] **eternal** [agelasting] **life**." and in **Luke 18:30** "...and in the world [age] to come **life everlasting** [agelasting]." As we are hearing the word of the kingdom we esteem more and more the value of continually hearing the word of the kingdom because of the potential of entering into a life of honor and glory during the millennial kingdom age. Those who were given ears to hear, therefore have the ability to understand the word of the kingdom and are the ones who have the potential to have this life for the coming age. If we understand the word of the kingdom, we know that we have been called. If we know that we have been called, then we know that we need to make our calling and election sure. **2 Peter 1:10-11** "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give **diligence** to make your calling and election sure: for **if ye do these things**, ye shall never **fall**: 11. For so an **entrance** shall be **ministered** unto you **abundantly** into the **everlasting** [agelasting] kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." If we do not give diligence to add to our faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love (verses 5-7) we will fall. This does not mean we will lose our salvation, but an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"NOT COME INTO CONDEMNATION"

John 5:24 "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, ..., and shall not **come** into **condemnation**;..." The present middle of the verb **come** [for myself] is in agreement with the present tense of the participles **heareth** and **believeth**. As long as we

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are hearing **the word** and are faithful and obedient to that word we will not suffer loss at the judgment seat of Christ. The Greek word for **condemnation** is *krisiv* which is also translated **accusation, damnation, and judgment**. It is at the Judgment Seat of Christ where our works will be judged as to whether they have been good works or bad works. We will receive rewards for the good that we have done and suffer loss for works that are not of faith. **Hebrews 11:6** "But without faith *it is* impossible to **please him...**" **Romans 14:23** "...for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin." **2 Corinthians 5:9-11** "Wherefore we **labour** [we are ambitious], that, ... we may be **accepted** [well pleasing] of him. **10. For** we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one **may receive** the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* **good** or **bad**. **11.** Knowing therefore the **terror** [fear] of the Lord, we persuade men..." It takes a balance between the fear of the Lord and the love of Christ to maintain the level of ambition we need to stand at the judgment seat with joy. When it comes to the judgment seat it does not make any difference who you are, **Colossians 3:25** "... he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons." **Revelation 3:11** "Behold, I come quickly: **hold that fast which thou hast**, that no man **take thy crown**." We can lose rewards that we have earned. **2 John 1:8** "Look to yourselves, that we **lose** not those **things** [rewards] which we have **wrought** [labored for], but that we receive a **full reward**."

"IS PASSED"

John 5:24 "...but is **passed** from death unto life." The verb *is passed* is the translation of the perfect active of *metabainw* [3327*] and could be translated **have passed** or **have departed**. The perfect tense "...implies a process but views the process as having reached its consummation..." (p. 200***) The process continues as long as the hearing and believing continue. The word *metabainw* is translated: **to go, to remove**, and most of the time **to depart**. It is translated **remove** in **Matthew 17:20** "... If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, **Remove** hence to yonder place; and it shall **remove**; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." To pass from the death unto the life is depart from the death to move to the life.

"THE DEATH"

John 5:24 "...but is passed from **death** unto life." The definite article **the** is before the word **death** [*qanaton*]. The word *nekros* is used to refer to being spiritually dead in trespasses and sins as well as for physical death. The word *qanaton* is used to refer to the death of the soul or for physical death.

Just as we looked for the meaning or definition of the phrase **the word** we will need to do the same thing for **the death**. The first occurrence of **the death** is John 5:24 and this does not give us much help. The phrase "**passed from [THE] death unto [THE] life**" occurs in just **one** other place and that is in **1 John 3:14-15** "We know that we have **passed from [THE] death unto [THE] life**, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother abideth in [THE] **death**. **15.** Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer **hath** [e[*cw*, present active, esteem] **eternal life** abiding [me>*nw*, present active, **endureth**] in him." Murderers can be saved but any one who is saved and a murderer will not esteem highly life for the age. **Galatians 5:21** "... **murders**, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, ... that they which **do** such things shall not **inherit the kingdom of God**."

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The passage in 1 John explains what the consequences are for hating your brother in the Lord. This would not make sense if this was referring to a blood brother. This is not someone who professes to be saved when he isn't, because if he was not saved the Holy Spirit would not refer to him as a brother. Using the terms "professor and possessor" is a non Biblical way of explaining something that you can not explain and still be consistent with the rest of the Word of God. The Holy Spirit wrote 1 John 3:14-15 and He knows who is in the family and who isn't; therefore He would not call him a brother if he indeed was not a brother. I believe that a brother in Christ is more than one who is saved. A brother is defined for us in **Matthew 12:50** "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, ..." A brother in Christ is one who is seeking to enter into the kingdom of heaven. **Matthew 7:21** "Not every one that saith unto me, **Lord, Lord**, shall **enter** into the **kingdom of heaven**; but he that doeth the **will of my Father** which is in heaven." **1 Corinthians 12:3** "... no man can say that Jesus is the **Lord**, but by the Holy Ghost." You can be saved and not do the will of the Father. If you are not interested in doing the will of the Father you are not a brother in Christ.

John 5:24 and 1 John 3:14-15 both deal with age-lasting life. The passage in John 5:24 makes reference to one who holds age-lasting life in high esteem and in 1 John 3:15 reference is made to one who loves his brother because he holds age-lasting life in high esteem. The word abiding in 1 John 3:15 is the Greek word **me>nw** and is also translated **endureth** and is in the present tense. The holding of age-lasting life in high esteem does not endure or continue in a brother that hates his brother in Christ. This is confirmed in **1 John 2:8-11** "Again, a **new commandment** I write unto you, ... 9. He that saith he is in the light, and **hateth his brother**, is in darkness even until now. 10. He that loveth his brother **abideth** [continue, dwell, endure, remain] **in the light**, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. 11. But he that hateth his brother **is in darkness**, and **walketh in darkness**, and **knoweth not whither he goeth**, because that **darkness hath blinded his eyes**." When a brother's eyes are blinded, then the word of the kingdom can not be understood. **Matthew 13:14** "... the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:" If life for the age is not regarded highly, then the word of the kingdom will not continue to be heard and then the one who was given ears to hear and eyes to see move from **the life** back to **the death**. If we justify hating our brother in Christ we have become lawless. To move from the life to the death means that there will be judgment given, at the judgment seat of Christ, for being disobedient to the new commandment. We do not have to continue to hate our brother in Christ and come into this condemnation, we can repent. All one has to do is to begin to hear the word of the kingdom again and begin to move from **the death** to **the life** again. **2 Peter 3:9** "The Lord is not slack concerning his [THE] **promise**, ... but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." **1 John 2:25** "And this is **THE promise** that he hath promised us, *even eternal* [age-lasting] **life**." Only those who have life can perish. Those dead in sin can not perish, they are already dead.

The death is our last enemy. Physical death is not an enemy because in **2 Corinthians 5:8** "We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be **absent from** the body, and to be present with the Lord." and in **Philippians 1:23** "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire **to depart**, and to be with Christ; which is **far better**:" we see that to be present with the Lord is far better. **1 Corinthians 15:26** "The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death." Until we

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are in the presence of the Lord, **the death** [qanatos] is our enemy. **1 Corinthians 15:54** "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, [THE] **Death** [qanatos] is swallowed up in victory." **1 Corinthians 15:56** "The sting of [THE] **death** [qanatos] is [THE] **sin** [lawlessness]; and the strength of [THE] **sin** is the law." The sin is a reference to lawlessness. **1 John 3:4** *** "Every one who is doing **the sin**, the **lawlessness** also he doth do, and **the sin is the lawlessness**,"

"THE LIFE"

John 5:24 "...but is passed from death unto [THE] **life**." The phrase "the life" first occurs in the Greek New Testament in **Matthew 7:13-14** "**Enter** ye in at the strait gate: ... **14**. Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto [THE] **life**, and **few** there be that **find** it." This is not the way to be saved. We **believe** to be saved. To look for a strait gate and then maintain our walk on a narrow way for salvation makes the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross unnecessary. When we believe to be saved the transaction is done, we are saved. Entering the narrow gate does not guarantee "THE LIFE," it just leads to "THE LIFE."

Another occurrence of the phrase "the life" is where the rich man asked "... what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life [agelasting life]? **17**. And he [Jesus] said... if thou wilt **enter** [ei]secomai, 1525*] into [THE] **life**, keep the commandments." **Matthew 19:16-17** The man asks how he might have agelasting life. The word **might have** is translated from the Greek word e]cw but is not in the present tense but is aorist tense. In this case the meaning of the word e]cw is **to have**. To help us to understand what the man asks him, Jesus clarifies the question with the phrase "if thou wilt enter into the life" in verse 17. To have life for the age is to enter into **the life**. To enter into **the life** is further defined in verses **Matthew 19:23, 24** "Then said Jesus ...That a rich man shall hardly **enter** into the **kingdom** of heaven. **24** ...It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to **enter** into the kingdom of God." To have agelasting life, to enter into life, and enter the kingdom of heaven is further defined in **Matthew 19:27-28** when "...Peter ...said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" In other words, we have done what you told the rich man to do, so what are we going to get? Then in verse **28**. "... Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, **ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging** the twelve tribes of **Israel**." The reference to the **regeneration** and **the throne of His glory** is a reference to the kingdom of the heavens which is the millennial reign of Christ. **The life** in John 5:24 is the same as entering into the kingdom of heaven or God and this is defined in Matthew 19:28 as sitting upon thrones judging the nations of the world.

CONCLUSION

Salvation comes before the calling. You can't be called if you are not saved. **2 Timothy 1:9** "Who hath **saved** us, and **called** us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," The calling is unto His kingdom and glory which has to do with the word of the kingdom. If you do not have ears to hear the word of the kingdom you do not have ears to hear His calling unto His kingdom and glory. **John 10:3** "To him the porter openeth; and

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the sheep **hear** his voice: and he **calleth** his own sheep by name..." **John 10:27** "**My sheep hear** [ajkou>w, 191* present active, they have ears] **my voice**, and I know [present active] them, and they follow [present active] me:" Not all have ears to hear, so only the **many** have ears to hear and therefore they are the ones who are called. **Matthew 20:16** "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for **many** be **called**, but few chosen." Those who have been called to His kingdom and glory through the word of the kingdom, have to root themselves in the word of the kingdom or they will be offended. Those who have been called must walk worthy of the kingdom by refusing anything that would choke the word of the kingdom so that they would not become unfruitful. **1 Thessalonians 2:12** "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath **called** you unto his **kingdom** and glory." To walk worthy of the Lord is to bear fruit. The message of John 5:24 is to be faithful in hearing the word of the kingdom and you will not be ashamed at the judgment seat of Christ. If we are faithful to the word of the kingdom, then we will bear fruit and enter the life of the kingdom of heaven ruling and reigning with Christ. If we stop hearing the word of the kingdom then we will become unfruitful and forfeit an abundant entrance into the coming Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

* Numbers are from the Strong's Concordance

** Youngs Literal Translation of the Bible

*** Dana & Mantey's Manual Grammar

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