



Title: *What Does the Bible Say about Losing Your Salvation?*

Romans 10:9-13 *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”*

Introduction: Salvation is best understood as an all-encompassing term used to describe the miraculous working of God in the life of a person who believes in Jesus Christ. When a person puts their faith in Jesus they are instantaneously forgiven, delivered, redeemed, justified, sanctified, reconciled, regenerated and sealed. All of these terms represent unique aspects of the miracle of God that we call salvation.

When a person believes in Jesus and is saved, is it possible for them to ever lose their salvation? Can the miraculous change that salvation brings in a person's life somehow be reversed? Our answer to this question is an emphatic no!

“We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God’s power, and are thus eternally secure in Christ forever.” **FBC Statement of Faith**

This teaching is often referred to as the eternal security of the believer.

I. Scriptural Basis for the Teaching of Eternal Security

A. The Teaching of Jesus

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.”*

John 6:35-40 *“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. **36** But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. **37** All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. **38** For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. **39** And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. **40** And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”*

- vs . 35–“never” 2x
- The implication is that when one believes in Jesus for salvation, a change takes place, and that this change is permanent.
- The phrase in verse 37, “...in no wise cast out”, and in verse. 39–“...I should lose nothing”, speak to faithfulness of Christ to those who have believed.
- “I will raise him up at the last day” is a clear reference to the hope of resurrection that all believers in Jesus have. Jesus keeps his promises!

John 10:27-29 *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: **28** And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. **29** My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.”*

- Positionally, all who believe in Jesus for salvation are in the Father’s hand, and no one can “pluck them”, or remove them from the Father’s hand.

John 20:29-31 *“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. **30** And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: **31** But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”*

- Through belief in Jesus, we can have life! Blessed, fruitful, meaningful, abundant, and eternal life.

B. The Teaching of the Apostles

We see the teachings of Jesus regarding the nature of salvation reflected in the teachings of the apostles.

1. Paul's teaching on justification in Romans

In the book of Romans, Paul argues that salvation is by faith in Jesus alone, and not by works. As he makes his argument, we see how salvation is a work of God, and not something that we earn or keep through our own works!

Romans 3:20-26 *“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”*

Romans 5:1-2 *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

- It is in His grace that we “...stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” What is the future of the believer? GLORY!

Romans 7:18-25, 8:1-4 *“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free

from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

- We see clearly the very real struggle that every believer has with sin and temptation. Ultimately, our victory is found in Christ, and His redeeming work!

2. Paul's teaching in 2 Timothy regarding the faithfulness of Christ.

2 Timothy 1:7-12 *"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. 8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 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, 10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. 12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*

- Verse 12 says, "...he is able..." He saved me, and He can keep me saved!

3. Paul's teaching in Ephesians regarding the "seal" of the Spirit.

Ephesians 1:13-14 *"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."*

- The Greek word translated "earnest" in this passage is a legal and commercial term that means "first installment, deposit, down payment, pledge". By giving us the Holy Spirit at salvation, Jesus has committed himself to give us all of the blessings and rewards associated with our salvation!

4. Peter's teaching in 1 Peter regarding our hope in Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-9 *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: 9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."*

- The phrase "...kept by the power of God..." refers to the security we have in Christ because of God's faithfulness.
- This passage is focused on the future blessings associated with salvation.

II. Challenges to the Teaching of Eternal Security

We want to consider some of the most commonly referred to passages of Scripture that are sometimes referenced as Scriptural support for the idea that we can lose our salvation.

A. *The Teaching to Continue and Endure to the End.*

John 8:30-32 *"As he spake these words, many believed on him. 31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

We see this teaching of Jesus reaffirmed by the Apostles.

Acts 14:21-22 *"And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, 22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."*

Colossians 1:19-23 *"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; 20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. 21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled 22 In the body*

of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: 23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;"

- In Matthew 10:22 and 24:13, Jesus says those who “endure to the end” will be saved. This is specifically in the context of persecution.
- To “continue in the faith” and to “endure to the end” are not requirements for salvation, but rather the evidence of salvation.
- These warnings are intended for those who ,in the face of persecution and temptation, consider walking away from Jesus. They need to understand that to do so would strongly suggest that they never truly believed, and are therefore in danger of facing eternal judgment.
- There is a distinction between the daily life-long struggle with sin and temptation, which all believers face and being “...move away from the hope of the Gospel.”
- There are multiple examples of those identified as true believers who had times where they did not actively follow Jesus.

B. Jesus’ Analogy about the Vine and Branches

John 15:1-8 *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”*

- Fruit-bearing branches are true believers in Jesus. In verse 2 we are told that the Father does a work of “purging”, to increase the amount of fruit produced.
- Barren branches are not true believers. They are associated with Christ, but ultimately do not know Him, and so they do not produce fruit.

- To “*abide in Christ*” is to be connected to the True Vine through faith in Him. Notice the relational nature of this—“*I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*”
- The Vine does not need the branches! The branches need the Vine.

John 15:9-16 “*As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. 10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. 12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. 13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. 16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*”

- These verses serve as a sort of commentary for verses 1-8.
- In verse 14, Jesus says, “*Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*” Is Jesus making obedience to His commands a requirement for salvation? No. Obedience is evidence of salvation! “*Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.*”
- In verse 16 we see how all true believers have been called and commissioned to “bring forth fruit” and that it is our connection to Him as the True Vine that enables us to be fruitful!

C. Passages in Hebrews Regarding Apostasy

Hebrews 6:4-9 “*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame 7 For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: 8 But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. 9 But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.*”

- The phrases in verses 4-5 are NOT describing salvation.
 - Verse 7 describes the working of God and His Word in the World. When it takes root, it produces, "...blessing from God."
 - Verse 8 describes what happens when it does not take root.
 - This a clear reference to the parable Jesus taught that we read about in Matthew 13.
 - In verse 9, the author makes a distinction between what is described in verses 4-5, and the, "...better things....things that accompany salvation."

Hebrews 10:26-31 *"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."*

- The "wilful sin" described in verse 26 is not a vague reference to sin, but specifically to the rejection of Jesus Christ described in verse 29.
- The phrase in verse 26, "...received the knowledge of the truth.." means that there are those who have heard a clear presentation of the truth of the Gospel, and possibly even at one time professed faith in Christ, only to ultimately reject Jesus.
- Verse 27 describes the people in verse 26 as, "adversaries." Those who have been reconciled to God through salvation cannot be His "adversaries."
- The writer goes on to make a clear distinction at the end of the chapter.

Hebrews 10:38-39 *"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."*

Conclusion:

1. We are saved by grace through faith alone in Jesus, and not by works. (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 3:20-26)
2. Once saved, we are eternally secure in Christ, and can never lose our salvation. (John 5:24,6:35-50, 10:27-29, 1 Peter 1:3-9)

