

Can I Lose Salvation?

How to Get Saved, Stay Saved and Live Saved

Your enemy is a thief, but even Satan and his kingdom cannot steal salvation from you. That's the good news. The "bad" news? God is not going to make you His slave—He wants your freedom even more than you do. He will not force you to stay saved. That choice is yours...

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days. Deuteronomy 30:19-20 ESV

You Need an Answer to This Question

Can you lose salvation? This question has to be answered and answered well or we will have very little confidence during our times of stress and distress. We not only need confidence that we cannot lose the salvation and favor we are now receiving; we don't want that confidence based on a false hope. We certainly don't want to get down the road and wake up to disaster like the hapless virgins with no oil in their lamps that Jesus warned us about!

There is a long-standing controversy in church history over whether a Christian can lose the free gift of salvation. Eventually, you will need to decide what you are going to base your sense of security on so that you will be able to keep standing in confident faith when the enemy comes to accuse you of not really being saved. Don't think he won't! He does it at times with all of us. That's just the way it is.



If you are a new believer, then you need to know up front that Yes! you can stay saved and be fully assured of your salvation every step of the way home to heaven. The God of All Grace who is saving you definitely is working with you to help you stay saved and to keep you in joyful confidence about it. This article will help you better understand staying saved.

If you are a seasoned believer, but still have little confidence of your salvation and are often plagued by fears of losing it, then you need to be reminded that you have an enemy who is aptly named the "Accuser of the Brethren," who has no power to separate you from God, but who desperately strives to rob you of your peace and confidence in God as your Savior. This article will help you understand what is required of you for staying saved, but you may need to revisit how you can know with assurance that you are saved.

All of us who believe would love to enjoy in every moment the "blessed assurance" that we are saved, are staying saved and will make it home to heaven. And we can! Even in our worst moments of weakness and temptation we can be wonderfully confident that our salvation is not



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in jeopardy. We can "reach through to heaven" by faith and access the full joy of our salvation at any time, since it is not based on our circumstances but on God's gift. "All it takes" is learning to believe God's truth instead of your feelings.

A Difference of Opinion

There are two schools of thought on this matter of security, two sometimes warring camps in the Body of Christ. Some believe that it is impossible for a Christian to lose the free gift of salvation. This straightforward position is called "the perseverance of the saints," "eternal security" or "once saved, always saved." Others believe that salvation is indeed a free gift of grace received through faith in Christ, but that a Christian must persevere in their relationship with Christ to maintain their salvation. It is possible to lose one's salvation, but genuine security is also possible. This paradoxical position is called "conditional security."

One reason for the division is that scripture (as you will often discover) can be interpreted in various ways. The problem is not with God or the Bible, but with us. We are the ones being drawn "out of darkness into His marvelous light." It is easy for us to get things wrong due to either our lack of knowledge and experience or our "itching ears"—the desire to hear what we wish was true.

This is a very important issue! Nothing less than our eternal destination is at stake, so of course there are strong feelings and careful reasoning on either side of the divide. Let's look at the pros and cons of both positions:

1. Position 1

Salvation cannot be lost; security is absolute. Obviously, if you choose to believe this there is an opportunity to have a powerful sense of security and confidence about your own salvation and the salvation of your loved ones. There are a lot of scriptures to back up this position, so it is fairly easily defensible against any condemning or accusing attack of the enemy. I believed it myself for the first fifteen years of my life in Christ and it really helped me to maintain a confidence in God and keep my "helmet of salvation" firmly planted on my head. These are the pros.

The cons are that there are simply too many serious warnings in the New Testament given to believers that their salvation can be lost. This is the problem coming from scripture and it is the one that eventually made me shift to the second position. The other main problem is that Jesus stated the principle that wisdom is proved by her children and that a tree is known by its fruit. The sad observation is that many people, who embrace some form of eternal security as their covering—regardless of their denomination—seem to behave as if living for the Lord doesn't matter! It seems to be "telling" people who believe it that now that you're saved, you're home free no matter what. Such complacency creates a dangerous sense of security. Instead of "waking up," resisting the enemy and seeking the Lord, believers are lulled into the sleep of sin instead.

A further problem with this position is the explanation given for why believers fall into sin. It is maintained that the person who has had a genuine conversion is guaranteed to persevere in the faith, because God will see to it that they do. The emphasis is on God's

sovereignty with little allowance for the operation of free will: If God chose you, then you will be saved and you will persevere! Therefore, when people who think they are Christians fall into grievous sin, they could not have been genuine believers to begin with. Their experience of belief in Christ, no matter how real it seems to them, must be due to a "false conversion." This can open the door to endless introspection: "Was I sincere enough? Were my motives pure enough? Did I really confess all my sins? Am I saved?" Such subjectivity is a trap which bears absolutely no resemblance to Paul's clear description of saving faith in Romans 10:9.

2. Position 2

Salvation can be lost, but security is real. You have to learn how to embrace both paradox and mystery to live with this one (our God is like that at times), but the sense of security it provides is at least equal to anything "eternal security" offers and it has none of the unpleasant side effects noted above.

The "danger" with this position is not so much being complacent about sin but failing to receive the true sense of security it offers. Realizing the need to stay connected to the Lord, keeps us resisting the enemy and fighting against sin—with perseverance, not necessarily perfection. However, this lack of perfection in the struggle can easily lead to anxiety and insecurity, unless we have a strong grip on grace. That "strong grip" is exactly what needs to be cultivated!

Staying Saved Is a Faith Issue

For this second position to work we first have to clear out of the way a huge problem or there will never be any sense of security coming to us. Do not make the mistake of trying to judge if you are saved by your "works" or by your "fruit." Believe me; you will never have enough of either to satisfy the devil's accusations! The Accuser will hammer you in your conscience over any infraction, lapse or failure doing his best to make it seem you aren't saved and won't be saved. However, the truth is that we are saved by grace through faith, not by our works! Since we cannot get saved by our works, we cannot get "unsaved" by our works (or lack of them).

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, that no one would boast. Ephesians 2:8-9 WEB

The key factor is the phrase "through faith." Our salvation is a faith issue, not a works issue! This is not the way it seems that it should be, nor is it the way it feels that it is (especially when we've goofed up), but according to scripture it is the way that it is. Since I am saved by grace through believing in Jesus, I can only become "unsaved" through not believing. This renouncing of the faith surely seems impossible to any new believer. How could anyone turn against Jesus? How could anyone turn against the faith in Him that brings so great a salvation? I have spoken to this in "[How can I stay saved?](#)", so for now let's press on to the final answer to the question we started with:

Can I Lose My Salvation?

Yes. It can be lost. You can choose (in some way) to repudiate your faith in Jesus. You can reject your own salvation. Admittedly, that is scary. Again, I have to say, how could anyone who

has been shown Jesus and the gospel be crazy enough to reject Him? Yet, consider this: If you have freedom of will to choose to be saved; you also have freedom of will to reject salvation. You do not have less freedom of will after meeting Jesus, you actually have more.

People can and do turn against their original faith in Jesus due to hurtful life experiences, defective discipleship, or by clinging to known sin, rather than determinedly calling on Christ to deliver them. The dangerous reality of having a free will, however, is obviously not where the powerful and genuine security comes from.

The Blessed Assurance

The security that upholds me every moment of every day (now that I have settled into believing it) is based on a faith-knowing of these five factors:

1) My salvation cannot be based on me in any way.

I am convinced that in me dwells no good thing apart from Jesus. I can do nothing without Him. He knows it. I know it. God is not looking to me to deserve His salvation. That would be impossible for me and it would make grace of no value. The grace of salvation is always a gift and it is always being extended to (though not forced upon) me.

2) God always wants to save me.

His love for me is perfect. Nothing can change this or take it from me.

3) The Blood of Jesus covers every sin.

His Blood covers every sin that I could possibly sin. Nothing can change this or take it from me.

4) I have already received saving faith.

If I know who Jesus is as Savior and Lord, that is, if I can confess He is Lord and believe God raised Him from the dead (as Savior from sin), then I have saving faith. Nothing can take this from me.

5) So long as I cling to believing.

As I continue to believe the truth about who Jesus is and I persevere in calling on His Name, then my salvation is secure for the promise is clearly written that all who call on His Name shall be saved. Yes, I will likely have frequent bouts of intense struggle with sin, but of course I am going to call on His Name! And so are you! How hard is that?

Just make sure that you don't allow yourself to start turning against God and Jesus and the salvation that they offer. They won't turn against you (all sins have been atoned for) or turn off the grace they send your way. As long as you want it, it is yours. But it will not be forced on anyone. So, don't ever let sin begin to make you want to shut yourself off from the very One whose salvation you need!

Prayer

Father, it is scary to think I could lose this salvation. Keep my focused on living for You and calling on Your Name. Thank You that Your love perfectly covers me, the Blood of Jesus fully atones for my sins, and You have given the Holy Spirit to live within me. I know I don't have to be perfect but help me to persevere in seeking to be faithful!

On to the Next Question!

How can I stop sinning? Just wanting an answer to this question is a tremendous step in the right direction and it is a clear sign that God is with you. The Holy Spirit in us wants to clean house. Sin, however, wants to flood through us like water through a colander, but we can learn how to close the holes and turn the flow down to a trickle.

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For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.

