

Can a person lose their salvation?

This question is just as important as the last question we answered concerning how a person is initially saved (*saved from an eternal separation from God*). We Christians should be absolutely confident in our righteous standing before God in Christ and I do not believe that God would leave such a vital aspect of redemption unclear. If there was ever an option that we could somehow lose that precious gift of salvation that the Lord gives, or if we could never know if we really received it or not, then our lives would be chaotic and uncertain at best.

Scripture clearly shows that our initial salvation cannot either be given back or taken away. Remember that Scripture teaches us that each individual is born *dead in trespasses in sins*, thereby separated from God (Eph. 2:1-10, Rom. 6:23a), and all that a person needs to do in order to receive *life* and be separated no more is to believe in the provision of death and shed blood that God has given as a substitutionary sacrifice (Acts 16:30). For all of us living on this side of the events on the Cross at Calvary, our provision is the Perfect Lamb of God, Jesus Christ our Passover Lamb (1 Cor. 5:7b). From the moment we believe in His death as a substitute for our own, we are *saved*, we are *born again*. This is what Paul is referencing in Romans 5 and Ephesians 2:8 when he speaks of the [free] *gift* given by God in/through Jesus Christ.

Paul also says in Romans 11:29 that the “gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.” That word ‘irrevocable’ is actually the same word as “repent”; meaning, God won’t *repent* – He won’t *change His mind* – concerning His gifts or His calling, as it pertains to man. So we can be quite certain that God won’t change His mind concerning His bestowing on us the gift of life and salvation unto eternity... *even if we act in a manner completely ungodly and unrighteous*. How can we really know this? By understanding exactly what occurs when we are born again and receive that initial salvation.

Since we are born *dead*, i.e. separated from God, we must have *life* breathed into us if we are to ever have fellowship with God – we must be *justified* (which means ‘made righteous,’ the same idea behind being given life). Our sins must be dealt with (Rom. 6:23). And the way they are dealt with is that the death and shed blood of God’s Provision not only takes our sins away (as if they never happened), but His Provision pays the debt that we owed because of the sins (John 1:29; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Col. 2:14). All of the sins we ever committed, right up to the moment of our initial faith in Jesus, are taken away – they are *passed over* (as in the events of Passover – God sees the blood and He passes over). The sentence of death that we each owe to God is paid on our behalf; God *passes a judgment* accepting that substitutionary sacrifice on our behalf (check Rom. 5:16, the root meaning of the word “justification” is “judgment”), and, in essence, *the firstborn has died* (Exodus chapters 11 and 12), *sparing us*.

The key point here is that at the moment we ‘appropriate the blood,’ so to speak (believe in Jesus), a judgment has been made, by God, regarding the payment owed Him. We no longer owe it because Jesus paid it for us. And since a judgment has passed...*it will not be overturned*. God passes the judgment and it is perfect.

However, even though our sins up until the point of initial salvation have been taken away, our *sin nature remains*, and we will still sin (1 John 1:8). Our behaviors and lifestyle choices, once we have been saved, have no bearing upon our initial salvation. *No bearing at all*. The gift of God will not be revoked. *However*, there will be an accountability and judgment of God's people if they choose to sin and follow after the flesh rather than follow the Spirit, because clearly, we should know better (1 Cor. 2:10-3:3, Rom. 6:11-13, Rom. 8:12-14, 2 Cor. 5:10).

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we [the church, meaning all Christians making up the body of Christ] must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, **he will receive a reward**. 15 If anyone's work is burned, **he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire**.

Galatians 6:7

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

Matthew 16:24-27

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever desires to save his life [Greek 'psuche, literally "soul"] will lose it, but whoever loses his life [Greek 'psuche,' literally "soul"] for My sake will find it. 26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 **For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.**

You get to choose how you live as a Christian, and I get to choose how I live as a Christian. And God will recompense each one of us *according to the choices we make*.

To think that anyone can determine whether or not a person is truly *saved* based simply on their actions is not only arrogant, but it is unscriptural. Additionally, to think that a saved person can behave in any manner they choose without incurring a judgment and punishment by God is not only unscriptural, but it is truly naïve.

So why don't the "churches" today teach this? There are many reasons, but primarily the error stems from the fact that most believe that man is only a two-part being, rather than a three-part being. Knowing and understanding the three parts of man—spirit, soul, and body—is *crucial* in understanding our final judgment. And knowing and understanding terms like

“salvation” and “inheritance” and “the kingdom of heaven” are key to *being prepared for that final judgment*.

For just as our initial salvation—that which impacts our spirit—carries with it a judgment that cannot be overturned, our *future salvation*—that which impacts our soul—will carry with it a judgment as well. That judgment, which occurs at the Judgment Seat of Christ upon Jesus’ return, will be according to our works and will be in relation to our **soul**, whether we lost our **soul** now, or not. Because if we have lost our soul now [died to self and lived to God], we will indeed pick it up again in the kingdom which is to come. If we have not lost our soul now [not died to self and not lived to God], then we will lose it in the kingdom which is to come.

1 Peter 1:3-9 [writing to the Church]

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again [“by grace you have been saved”] to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 **receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.**

Hebrew 10:35-39 [writing to the Church]

Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him" [quote from Habakkuk 2:3-4] 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, **but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.**

Please continue on with the 10 basic questions to read more about this.