

Eternal Security of the Believer

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The question of whether a saved person can lose his or her salvation can easily be resolved by obtaining a correct understanding of the true nature of salvation as presented in Scripture. Salvation is the work of God. It is not emotion, or mental assent but a real experience with God. God does many things **for us** and **in us** the moment we believe. When Jonah was helplessly imprisoned in the belly of the whale he reminded himself that "*salvation is of the LORD*" and the LORD caused the fish to vomit up Jonah; **God did it** and Jonah was set free.

The salvation of mankind is the theme of the Bible. When Adam sinned he believed the lie of the Devil and agreed with Satan that God was a liar and that if he ate of the forbidden fruit he would be "*as God*". In other words, God was depriving him of becoming a god.

Adam plunged the human race into a state of rebellion against God and if it were not for the love of God, Adam and all his descendants would be justly damned in the lake of fire for ever.

The entire record of revealed Truth describes the plan of God to restore mankind to fellowship with God. However, when God created Adam He gave him a free will for He made him in "*the image of God*". Man was made to have fellowship with God. Each descendant of Adam is an eternal being possessing body, soul, and spirit, from the moment of conception, and will exist for all eternity, either in God's presence, or in the lake of fire with the Devil and his angels.

Throughout Scripture God has revealed the only way that any human being can be saved and He explains the nature of that salvation in the Bible which is the Word of God. There has only ever been **one way** of salvation. It matters not what age a person has lived in, God has made it abundantly clear that no man can be good enough to merit salvation, therefore salvation cannot be obtained by any amount of good works.

Every living person has a sinful nature inherited from Adam and it is biased toward sin so that from an early age we all commit acts of sin, as the Bible says: *“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God”* (Rom.3:23). If we do good deeds these cannot gain merit with God. The Bible states that salvation is *“not of works lest any man should boast”*. God’s mercy and grace is freely available to all who put their trust in Christ to save them.

Sin is an offense against God. It may also be an offense against our fellow man but essentially it is against God, and God has revealed that *“the wages of sin is death but **the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord**”* (Rom.6:23). God’s justice demands a life for a life. God has said:

“Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezek.18:4).

Therefore the only way for God to forgive is for a substitute to die in our place. In the Old Testament, God taught His people this truth by the offering of animal sacrifices that could never take away sin but pointed forward to a day when God would provide a perfect substitute in the person of His own Son, the Lord Jesus.

In the fulness of time Christ came and all who trust in God’s mercy expressed in the shed blood of a substitute, are secure for all eternity. Since Christ came we have been able to look back to Calvary’s cross and accept the pardon purchased by Christ when He took our sin and bore the wrath that we deserve. We can now rejoice in the certain knowledge of sins forgiven but salvation is much more than the forgiveness of sins.

Even after we are forgiven we sin because we are still in a body that is unredeemed and our final deliverance will occur when we receive our resurrection body. The Bible teaches us that the moment we believe we are redeemed, *“bought back”*, from sins dominion, but while we are in the flesh, we still struggle with temptation and sin.

The moment we believe with the heart we **are saved** through faith alone in Christ, and all our sin is forgiven on the grounds of Christ’s finished work on the cross; daily we are **being saved**

from the power of sin, and in the future we **will be saved** when our bodies are raised in the likeness of Christ's resurrection body.

To understand what happens at the moment of conversion is most important for our daily living and our peace of mind. Failure to understand what God has done FOR us and IN us will only lead to confusion. It will impact on our peace of mind and on our relationships with others. So what did happen when I trusted in the Lord Jesus for salvation?

What Did Christ Do FOR Me?

1) Christ forgave me all my sins. That means that now I have peace with God and God will never hold my sin against me because He forgives, not for any good thing that I have done, but entirely because of His mercy and for Christ's sake. Christ is my Saviour and He took the complete punishment for all my sin. Therefore I can never again be required to answer for the debt that He has fully paid.

2) This pardon obtained by the Lord Jesus is more than forgiveness; it attributes to my account the righteousness of Christ my Substitute. God sees me through Christ and in Christ. In other words I am justified in God's sight; just-as-if-id never sinned.

The Bible speaks of this as the "imputed" righteousness of God and so we read:

*"Abraham believed God, and it was **counted unto him for righteousness...** to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, **unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works**" (Rom.4:3-6).*

The difference between forgiveness and imputed righteousness may be illustrated as follows:

Suppose you had a debt at some shop which you could not pay and the accountant at the store wrote across your record, "Forgiven". You would not have to pay the debt but the debt

would always be recorded. However, if someone paid the debt in full on your behalf then there would be no remembrance of your failure to pay and you would enjoy the same status as all those who had never failed to pay: that's justification. The righteous act in extinguishing your debt has been attributed to you and that is imputed righteousness. Nobody need know that you did not pay for your record states that the debt has been paid in full!

3) But more: The forgiven soul has been saved from God's wrath:

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom.5:9).

Jesus stated clearly that all who believe in Him have eternal life and will never go to eternal hell or the lake of fire:

"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 5:24).

Everlasting life is a present possession and in the future, we can never perish in hell; **we shall never come into condemnation**; because we have **already** passed from death to life. The lake of fire is *"the second death"* (Rev.20:6). When the *"great white throne"* judgment is held no saved soul will be present; only *"death and hades"*; the body and souls of unsaved stand before the Lord at the great white throne (Rev.20:11-15). If I could lose my salvation then eternal life would not be eternal and there are wonderful promises assuring me that I cannot lose my salvation. Jesus said:

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one" (John 10:27-30).

Paul cries:

"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea

rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?... For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, ... nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom.8:33-39).

4) I have reserved for me a sure home in heaven:

*“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, **To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time**” (1Peter 1:3-5).*

What Did Christ Do IN me?

Not only did the Lord Jesus do something FOR me when I was saved but, by His Spirit He did a work of grace IN me. I became God’s *“workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works”* (Eph.2:10).

i) I was *“born again”* into the family of God and became a child of God. God became my heavenly Father (John 1:12; 1John 3:2).

ii) The Holy Spirit came to dwell in me and my body became the Temple of the Holy Spirit (Rom.8:9-11; Gal.3:14;4:6-7; 1Cor.6:19).

iii) I was sealed with the Holy Spirit, as the guarantee, until the day of redemption (Eph.1:13-14).

iv) I became a *“new creature in Christ: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”* (2Cor.5:17).

v) I was baptized (placed in) the body of Christ, which His Church, by the Holy Spirit. I am now a member of His body and to be lost after I am saved would disfigure the body of Christ.

*“For by one Spirit are we **all baptized into one body**, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many”* (1Cor.12:13-14).

So amazing is this work in me that I am protected from Satan and though he may test me, he can never “take hold” of me:

“We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not” (1John 5:18).

The word translated “touch” is more than mere contact but literally means to “attach oneself” or “lay hold of”. Satan may cast his fiery darts at the believer; he may use his wiles to try and deceive; he may use ungodly people to oppose and hinder, but he cannot possess or attach himself to any born-again soul. Those who claim to cast evil spirits out of Christians are “false apostles, deceitful workers” (2Cor.11:13). If a person has an evil spirit then that person has never been saved no matter how much they can talk the talk and claim to be saved.

The born-again soul has a new relationship with the world and this is one evidence that a work of grace has taken place in the heart. The presence of God’s Holy Spirit in the believer is the guarantee to keep the child of God. John wrote:

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1John 5:4-5).

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world” (1John 2:15-16).

The born-again believer does not habitually, wilfully and characteristically go on committing sin. Our “old man” which is the “former conversation” (manner of life in our unconverted days) is dead (Col.3:9-10). We still have the flesh to contend with but when a Christian sins he is chastened of the Lord:

“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all (believers) are

partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons” (Heb.12:6-8).

If a man claims to be a Christian and leaves his wife and children for another woman to live with her, that is not just sinning due to ignorance, nor is it being deceived by the deceitfulness of sin, but constitutes a wilful, deliberate, calculated act which brings him into habitual adultery. Whatever profession such people may have had is meaningless; the Bible says they have never been saved.

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (1Cor.6:9-11).

When a man at the Corinthian Church lived with his father’s wife Paul said he was not saved even though the Corinthian Christians had not judged the man (1Cor.5:1-5). The man was to be put out in order that he might be ashamed and repent before he met his God.

Sometimes we hear people say that they lived in sin after they had professed conversion and later “came back to the Lord”. If they are saved now then they did not come “back” to the Lord but they came to the Lord in genuine repentance for the first time. The Gospel of Christ is not a nice theory but the “*power of God unto salvation to every one that believes*” (Rom.1:16)

“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin (habitually, wilfully); for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin (habitually and wilfully), because he is born of God” (1John3:9).

There are also cases where an individual has professed conversion and later turned away from God entirely even becoming atheistic or openly living in sin. Such cases were never saved from sin because the Lord never loses his sheep. John wrote of such:

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not (does not continue) in the

doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth (continues) in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son” (2John 1:9).

We are not saved **because we continue** but if we are saved we will continue. A new creature in Christ will never deny the perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus or His deity and God says such apostates were never saved as John wrote:

*“They went out from us, but **they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us:** but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things” (1John 2:19-20).*

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth and Jesus said He would guide us into all truth (John16:13). It is a noticable fact that a young convert taking the Bible literally, has more light than an unbelieving theological professor who thinks it scholarly to deny the person and work of Christ.

Those who teach that a saved person can be lost have no concept of the salvation that God has provided or the power of the Gospel to save from sin and to keep from sin. It is an indictment on the Lord Jesus that He would lose one of His sheep when He has promised that they *“shall **never perish** neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand”* (John 10:28).

Jesus warned that there would be many who would profess salvation but never experience the regenerating power of the holy Spirit. He said:

*“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. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, **I NEVER KNEW YOU:** depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matt.7:21-23).*

Multitudes today claim to “prophesy”, “cast out demons” and perform healing “miracles” in Jesus’ name and Jesus says, **“I NEVER KNEW YOU!” They never at any time were saved.**

They spoke in tongues gibberish and thought it was the Holy Spirit but were deceived by an evil spirit. When demonic manifestations occurred they attribute these to God and the Lord was blasphemed.

Jesus said,

“Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37).

The words *“in no wise”* are from the Greek word μηδε which is a **double negative** and means that under no circumstances, at any time, will those who come to Christ be cast out. A stronger verse for the eternal security cannot not be found.

The New Covenant

God made several covenants with Israel; the Abrahamic Covenant; the Sinaitic Covenant; the Priestly Covenant; the Palestinian Covenant; and the Davidic Covenant. He promised that he would make a New Covenant with *“the house of Israel and the house of Judah”* in the last days (Jer.31:31). This New Covenant was referred to by our Lord at the Last Supper when He took the cup and said,

“This cup is the new testament (covenant) in my blood, which is shed for you” (Luke 22:20).

The Apostle Paul repeated the Lord’s words when he spoke of the Lord’s supper in 1Cor.11:25.

The New Covenant is based on the sacrifice of the Lamb of God and therefore produces a different result to that achieved under the Old Covenant at Sinai. The Epistle to the Hebrews shows how much better the New Covenant is to the Old Covenant and is based on better promises, a better sacrifice and a better priesthood.

The New Covenant also produced a better experience for those who believed for under the Old Covenant, believers had the Holy Spirit WITH them but under the New Covenant believers have the Holy Spirit IN them. Jesus said:

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth;”

whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth WITH you, and shall be IN you” (John 14:16-17).

The Church has entered into the spiritual blessings of the New Covenant that God will make with Israel and is made a partaker of the *“root and fatness of the olive tree (Israel)”*(Rom.11:17).

Under the New Covenant *“all Israel”* will be saved after the *“fulness of the Gentiles be come in”* (Rom.11:26) and the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon the nation. Under the Old Covenant Israel constantly turned away from the Lord but under the New Covenant Israel will **never again turn away** from the Lord; Jerusalem *“shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down **any more for ever”*** (Jer.31:40). In Jer.32:40 God says:

*“And I will make an **everlasting covenant** with them, that I will **not turn away from them**, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that **they shall not depart from me.**”*

Ezekiel says the same thing:

*“Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have **poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel**, saith the Lord GOD (Ezek.39:29).*

Once Israel enters into the new covenant based on the perfect sacrifice of Christ she will **never be lost**; it is an **everlasting** covenant and the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon the nation.

That is **eternal security for Israel** and since the Church has tapped into the New Covenant, every believer is also secure for all eternity. To believe otherwise is to bring the Church back under the Old Covenant.

Joel described the conversion of Israel under the New Covenant in the last days and Peter identified it with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost:

*“And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I **pour out my spirit**” (Joel 2:29).*

Thus we find in the New Testament Paul stating that Christians are sealed with the holy Spirit **unto the day of redemption** (Eph.1:13-14). That’s eternal security!

Misunderstood Scriptures

There are a number of Scriptures that are used by those who believe a Christian can lose his or her salvation but on close examination it can be shown that they do not support such teaching. We will examine seven of these Scriptures placing them in their context:

i) Hebrews 10:26-31: The key verse is verse 26 and verses 38 & 39 must also be considered in the same context.

First we must establish the context of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*. **It was written to JEWS; Hebrews.** That should be obvious from the title but it is overlooked. The entire book is explaining **to the Jews** the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant.

When the Gospel was preached at Pentecost a great number of Jews joined the ranks of the Church including many of the priests but just as Jesus warned in Matt.13 there would be false believers among the true believers so there were some Hebrews that joined the Church but when persecution arose and they were threatened with excommunication from the synagogue they went back to the Temple worship under the Old Covenant offering animal sacrifices instead of accepting Christ as the perfect sacrifice. There are solemn warnings throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews of the consequences of turning away from Christ and returning to animal sacrifices.

In chapter 10 Paul has been emphasizing the New Covenant when God said He would

*“put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities **will I remember no more**. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin (Heb.10:16-18).*

He urges the Jews to *“draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith”, to “hold fast the profession of faith”, “consider one another... not forsaking the assembling of ourselves...”* For *“if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but...judgment”*.

The Jews who had a mere head knowledge of the Gospel had understood the truth, but had not trusted with all their heart in

Christ, were going back to the Temple sacrifices and were warned that there was no other sacrifice for sins; the Temple sacrifices would never bring salvation.

Then in verses 38 and 39 we have the warning:

*“Now the just shall live by faith: but **if any man draw back (to Judaism)**, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But **WE ARE NOT OF THEM WHO DRAW BACK** unto perdition; but of them that **believe to the saving of the soul.**”*

Some Jews believed with the head but others from the heart: “to the saving of the soul”. Those who went back never were saved though they had come close.

Those who interpret this Scripture to mean a Christian can lose his salvation are taking the passage out of the Hebrew context.

ii) A second and similar passage is in Hebrews 6:4-6:

*“For it is impossible for those who were once **enlightened**, and have **tasted** of the heavenly gift, and were made **partakers** (companioned) of the Holy Ghost, And have **tasted** the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, **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.”*

Here is a description of a Jew who has shown interest and witnessed the work of the Holy Spirit amongst the Christians yet has chosen to turn their back on Christ, and by denying Him, put Him to an open shame. That is **sinning against light** and such have no further opportunity to repent.

These things do not constitute salvation because Paul states:

*“But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and **things that accompany salvation**, though we thus speak” (Heb.6:9).*

Judas was a classic case of such Jews. He was enlightened, companioned with the Lord, witnessed the miracles; the powers of the world to come, and then went back to the high priests to betray the Lord and put Him to an open shame. Afterwards when he realized what he had done he could not repent and hanged himself. It was impossible to renew him again to

repentance. **Judas never was saved**; he was a thief all along and had the bag! Hebrews chapter 6 is a warning to any who may be like Judas and who were never truly saved.

iii) A third Scripture is used to teach that a Christian can lose his or her salvation; Romans 11:19-22:

*“Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, **if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.**”*

Again the context makes the passage clear. The Book of Romans is divided into three sections:

Section 1) The doctrines of sin and salvation - Chs. 1 to 8

Section 2) Dispensational to show the relationship between Israel and the Church; between the Jews and Gentiles.

Section 3) Practical Teaching on the Christian life for the believer.

In chapter 11 Israel is seen as the olive tree and Israel as the “*natural branches*” which, because the nation had rejected Messiah, have been removed from God’s testimony during this Church Age when the Gentiles, “*a wild olive branch*”, has been grafted into the olive tree in Israel’s place. Here God is NOT speaking of individual Jews and Gentiles but two classes of people. Within Israel there was “*a remnant according to the election of grace*” (Rom.11:5). Paul was one of them.

God’s plan is that, at the end of the Church age, “*when the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*”, Israel will repent and be grafted in again to their own olive tree. That doesn’t mean that every individual Gentile in the world will come in but he is referring to the Gentiles as a class to whom the Gospel is entrusted in this Church age. When the last Gentile who makes up the Bride of Christ will come in then the Rapture will take place and God will again turn to Israel who will seek the Lord in the Tribulation.

The “*fulness of the Gentiles*” is the completion of the Church which is largely a Gentile Church though there is a remnant of Israel in the Church eg. Paul. At the end of the Acts of the Apostles Paul told the Jewish elders at Rome that they had closed their eyes to the truth and “*the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it*” (Acts 28:28).

However, not all Gentiles are saved, for God is “*taking out of them a people for His name*” (Acts 15:14).

The warning is given in Romans 11:19-22 to Gentiles as a class, not to think that they are any better than Jews as a class, for if the Gentiles turn away from the truth God will judge the Gentiles as a class, just as He did the Jews.

Today we are living in the last days of this age and the Gentiles have turned away from the truth. Christendom has not “*continued in his goodness*”. Roman Catholicism and Reformed Theologians see no future for Israel in God’s prophetic plan; they are despising Israel! Also, they have apostatized and departed from the Word of God and God is going to judge Christendom in the Great Tribulation after the “*fulness of the Gentiles*” has come in and the true Church has been raptured.

When the Bible says God has blessed Gentiles with “*goodness*” but if they do not “*continue in his goodness*” they will “*be cut off*”, He is speaking dispensationally and not individually. The final judgment of Christendom is described in Revelation chapters 17 and 18.

This verse has nothing to do with personal salvation and certainly does not suggest that a saved person can be “*cut off*”. Saved individuals are a remnant from the Gentiles and are not a part of the apostates who make up Christendom.

iv) Another Scripture that is misinterpreted and taken out of context is 2Peter 2:20-22:

“For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have

known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

Again we point to the context. Who are these people that Peter is speaking about? Are they saved individuals? Is there anything in the chapter that suggests they were ever saved? The answer is, No! Verse 1 of the chapter states they were "*false prophets*" and the fact that they "*knew the way of righteousness*" and turned from it does not mean they were saved and then lost.

The Devil knows the way of righteousness and unsaved people know the way of righteousness. In fact, every soul on the face of the earth has light from God (John1:9). Some respond and receive salvation and some reject the light and choose to be unsaved.

These false prophets had not only the knowledge of the truth but had preached it for a while. They twisted the Word of God just as unsaved professors in Theological Colleges do today. Many of these knew the truth when they were young but were not saved. When they went into Seminaries where they heard unbelieving teaching, they accepted it because they were not regenerated by the Holy Spirit. If they had been saved before they entered Seminary they would have stood against the error but their professors appealed to their academic pride and superior knowledge. If they had been saved they would have stood with the Word of God against error. We don't have to be a scholar to interpret the Bible if we **believe**.

Balaam was a false prophet who knew the truth and even, for a while, prophesied blessing on Israel, but he never was saved and always was a false prophet. The fact that these false prophets were like dogs turning again to their vomit simply indicates they **never were saved and their false profession only lasted for a while**. During this time they experienced reformation and in that way "*escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord*".

The lesson to learn is that we are not saved by knowledge. Unsaved people can know the truth. We are saved by faith; trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Saving faith is a commitment to Christ; we *“believe to the saving of the soul”*.

I can recall a friend who came to a Gospel service and was convinced but chose not to trust in Christ. When Paul stood before King Agrippa he said, *“I know that thou believest.”* Agrippa responded, *“Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian”*. He had the knowledge of the truth but would not yield to Christ and trust in Him for salvation.

The word *“believe”* has two aspects: it can mean mental ascent to the facts and it can mean complete trust in the object of faith. James said:

“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble” (James 2:19).

Those who have a false profession believe with the mind but never trust in or believe with the heart. Paul says:

*“With **the heart** man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation”* (Rom.10:10).

As we view people we cannot see their heart. They may say they believe. They may study the Bible and even teach what it says for some time. They may engage in work to convince others to believe but never have trusted in Christ with the heart. As a young man I went to high school and professed to be a Christian. I wore a badge on my lapel with the words, *“Jesus saves”*. I told another boy at school that if he believed in Christ he would be saved yet I had never trusted in Christ to the saving of my soul. A year later after I had started work I came under conviction of sin and realized I had never been born again of the Spirit of God and on the 1st August 1948 I surrendered to Christ and sought Him with all my heart. I experienced what Paul told the Hebrews who were truly saved:

*“that by two immutable things, in which **it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we***

have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil” (Heb.6:18-19).

That night I **fled for refuge** to Christ and not only believed the facts of the Gospel with my mind but trusted in Christ with all my heart. Now I am safe eternally because Christ has entered heaven to appear in the presence of God for me as my advocate with the Father. He pleads my cause with the Father. No matter what storms may blow upon me I am **anchored within the veil both sure and steadfast!**

v) Galations 5:4 is also quoted to support the saved and lost teaching but this is another instance of taking a Scripture out of context. The Epistle to the Galatians was written to answer false Judaizing teachers who were teaching that unless the Galatians kept the ceremonial law they could not be saved. These were apostate false teachers who Paul said were teaching *“another Gospel (of a different kind) which is not another (of the same kind)”* (Gal.1:6-7). Like all false religions they taught salvation by works. Paul said they were perverting the Gospel (Gal.1:7) and were *“accursed”*. That means they were not saved.

Those among the Galatians to whom Paul spoke the words in our text were described as,

“whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Gal.5:4).

No saved person is justified by the law. Paul is not addressing saved Galatians but unsaved Judaizers who were rejecting the grace of God and trusting in their works.

vi) Another passage of Scripture quoted in support of saved and lost is Col.1:23.

“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproueable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel” (Col.1:21-23).

There are many evidences of salvation and one of the evidences of salvation is that we do continue in the faith. If we do not it is

because we have never entered in the first place. This is taught elsewhere in the New Testament. We have already quoted John: *“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, **they would no doubt have continued with us**: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things”* (1John2:19-20).

Here it is clear that there is “no doubt” that if those who left the faith had been “of us” believers then they would have continued but because they never were saved and were only sham Christians, God allowed them to depart so that they would be exposed as unbelievers. Save people never fall away from Christ and it is one of the signs of a genuine work of God in the heart that true believers continue.

The Lord’s parables illustrate this truth in Matthew chapter 13. When the seed of the Word of God is sown some falls on the wayside and Satan snatches it away because the heart is too hard to receive the seed. Some falls on stony ground where the soil is shallow and it springs up but when the sun gets hot it withers because there is no depth and it never bears fruit. Likewise the seed that fell among thorns springs up but is choked with the cares of the world and never bears any fruit.

Only the seed that falls in broken soil springs up and bears fruit: some 30 fold; some 60 fold; some 100 fold.

Jesus was teaching that only the seed in broken hearts brings the fruit of the Spirit which is the evidence of salvation but others who are not genuinely convicted and broken will fall away because they have never received the Holy Spirit and cannot show the fruit of the Spirit.

Continuance in the faith is shown to be an evidence of salvation in Hebrews chapter 3 where Paul says:

*“Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold **fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end...** Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you **an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God”** (Heb.3:6,12).*

When Paul addresses “brethren” he is not speaking to “brethren in Christ” but to **Jewish brethren** because he is not addressing a church. He is addressing **the Hebrews** his kinsmen according to the flesh. Some are saved and some are unsaved and some have professed salvation but had only a head belief. The only way he could know who were the truly saved is if they continued steadfast to the end because that is an evidence of a genuine work of grace in the heart. **No saved person has an evil heart of unbelief.** A saved person believes in the heart (Rom.10:9-10).

vii) Finally 2Tim.2:12 is supposed to teach that a saved soul can be lost.

“If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself” (2Tim.2:12-13).

Paul was a prisoner at this time and was suffering for the Lord’s sake. Christians were being persecuted for Christ and Paul is saying that if they are faithful when persecuted they will be *rewarded* and reign as kings in the kingdom, but if they deny the Lord under severe persecution they will be **deprived of rewards**. The next verse shows clearly that even if their faith fails in the time of persecution the Lord will still be faithful and cannot deny Himself. So rather than teaching that a saved and suffering Christian can be lost the passage teaches that even if a believer wilts under persecution they may lose reward, but will not be cast away, because the Lord will be faithful to them He cannot break His promise.

Summing Up

The Scriptures cited above which are used to defend the teaching that a saved person can be lost are taken out of their context and made to contradict the plain statements of the Word of God.

The very nature of the salvation that God has given us makes it impossible for those who believe with the heart to ever be lost:

- We are pardoned and our sins will never be remembered against us.
- We are justified before God and have the righteousness of Christ placed to our account.

- We have been born again and have been made the children of God and when we sin we are chastened of the Lord and *"WE KNOW that when He shall appear we shall be like Him"* (1John 3:2).

- We are new creatures in Christ, **regenerated** by the Spirit of God, and old things have passed away; all things have become new. Our "old man", our former manner of life, is dead.

- We have been given the free gift of eternal life.

- We have an inheritance reserved in heaven.

- We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. His seed remains in us and we cannot habitually, wilfully or characteristically go on sinning.

- Since we are born again Satan cannot lay hold of us.

- We have been baptized by the Spirit of God into the Body of Christ. We are members of His Body; He is the Head.

- We are part of the Bride of Christ and Christ is the heavenly Bridegroom.

- Since we are born again we overcome the world.

- We have the fruits of the Spirit of God either 30, 60, or 100 fold.

- We have manifold promises from God that we will never perish, that we have eternal life, and that nothing in heaven or earth can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. God cannot lie and is faithful that promised.

With such a salvation it is impossible for a truly saved person to ever be lost. For a saved person to be lost that soul would have have their pardon cancelled; eternal life taken back; the imputed righteousness of Christ removed, and they would be removed from the family of God. Their espousal to Christ would have to be broken; the body of Christ would have to be dismembered; the promises of God would have to be denied; the Holy Spirit would have to depart and break His guarantee to seal us to the day of redemption, and our mansion reserved in heaven would have to be disposed of. **It can't happen!**