

# The Old-Time Evangelistic News

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## Can Salvation Be Lost? (Part 1) (Hebrews 5:5-10)

We begin this month looking at a subject that has been debated for centuries. I do not expect to give reasoning that is so profound that the discussion will be ended, but I do, with the Holy Ghost's help, want to give what He has revealed to me about the subject. Many good preachers such as Oliver Greene, John R. Rice, Harry Ironside, Harold Sightler, and Curtis Hutson, have written articles and books about eternal security. I will not be able to say anything better than what they have said, but the Lord has given me this message on this particular subject, and He has laid this message on my heart for this particular time. There are several different terms that have been used to describe the reality that one cannot lose his salvation. Among these are "eternal security" and "once saved always saved." These terms, while good, are not found in the Bible. However, the truth that they are expressing is found repeatedly throughout Scripture. There are three phrases found in the Bible that speak of this subject: eternal salvation—found 1 time; eternal life—found 30 times; and everlasting life—found 11 times. These phrases alone should put the issue to rest—salvation is eternal; therefore, it cannot be lost. But, there are some that teach that salvation can be lost. Are they right? From my understanding of the Bible, they are not. True Biblical salvation cannot not be lost.

When I used to work a public job, I encountered some people that were taught and believed that they could lose their salvation. One of them was a preacher. On many different occasions, we debated on and on whether salvation could be lost. I would give Scripture that would prove that one cannot lose salvation, and he would try to give Scripture that would back up his reasoning that one could lose his salvation. One day we were discussing the issue again, so I asked him,

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"Why do think that you can lose your salvation?" He answered, "Because I do not think that the blood of Jesus will cover future sins." The Holy Ghost helped me at this moment. I asked him another question, "Were not all of your sins in the future when Christ died?" He said, "I never thought of it like that."

The reality to us is that all of our sins were future when Christ died, except of course those who had lived in the Old Testament period. But the thing we must remember is what we are asking Jesus to do when we get saved. We are asking Him to pay the price for all of our sins—past, present, and future. As we will see later, salvation is the payment for the penalty of sin. That payment involves the penalty of past sin, present sin, and future sin. If you study the Bible correctly, and understand salvation for what it really is, salvation covers the penalty for all sin for all time. Future sins do not change or destroy what has happened at the moment of salvation. In fact, the penalty for even future sins has already been taken care of in the blood of Christ. How is that possible? It may help us to remember that in the mind of God there is no past, present, or future. In God's eyes, everything is eternal; everything is a constant present tense. We cannot comprehend that because we are creatures of time. Everything revolves around the clock, and how much time is gone, or how much time is remaining. But with God, everything is present. There are no past sins or future sins. If we have trusted in Christ, **all** sins are washed away. I realize that this may be difficult to comprehend, but as we study the subject of salvation more, I hope that it becomes clearer to all of us.

Another person that I worked with at a different job also believed that you could lose your salvation. We discussed the issue several times, and one of those times, I asked him specifically, "Why do think that you can lose your salvation?" He responded, "Because I do not think that people can live wickedly and still be saved." I answered, "You are right; but it is not because they lost their salvation; it is because they were never saved from the beginning; they only had a profession, not a possession of salvation."

We must not lose sight of truth no matter what one says. Someone

may say that they are saved, but if their actions do not match up with what the Bible says, then they are not truly saved. True Bible salvation will change people. If their lives do not change, it is because they are not truly saved. And it is not because they lost their salvation. As we will see from the Bible, salvation cannot be lost. If someone is living a life contrary to the teachings of the Bible, it is not because they at one time were saved, and then lost it. They are living wrong because they have never been saved. They may have been reformed for a little while, but true Biblical salvation causes a permanent change in the heart.

After talking with these and other people, I began to realize that people do not truly understand what salvation is. They also will misinterpret Scripture and are misguided by self and Satan. That formed the basis for the development of this message. I began by asking the question, “Can salvation be lost?” The answer is no! But why do people teach that you can lose it? From what the Lord showed me, the false teaching that one can lose salvation results from three problems: I. A Misunderstanding of what Salvation Is; II. A Misinterpreting of what Scripture Says; and III. A Misguiding by Self and Satan. A person may not knowingly be guilty of these, but if they believe that salvation can be lost, then they are guilty of these nonetheless.

The first reason that someone teaches that salvation can be lost is because they have **A Misunderstanding of what Salvation Is**. I say this because it is a reality. When you look at what happens at salvation, it is a permanent change. As we will see, there are nine different terms that are used that fall under the subject of salvation. We will look at them individually and see what the Bible says about each of them. I pray that you will understand what happened at salvation. I also pray that you will understand that what happened at that moment of salvation is irreversible. The terms used in the Bible to describe salvation are wonderful truths. I believe wholeheartedly that if we understand what salvation truly is, we will see that it is eternal and cannot be lost.

The first term about salvation that we will look at is Justification. Romans 5:1 and 5:9 say, “*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (9) Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*” Galatians 2:16 says, “*Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*” Titus 3:7 says, “*That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*” These are just four of the many verses that are written about the subject of justification. In fact, the subject of justification occurs over 60 times. The various forms of the word are justification, justified, justifier, justifieth, justify, and justifying.

What does it mean to be justified? Commonly, it is said to mean “just as if I had never sinned.” That is a good definition, but only covers the negative aspect of the work. A fuller, broader definition is “the act whereby the guilty is declared righteous in the sight of God.” We who were filthy, vile, and unrighteous (see Ephesians 2:1-3 and Titus 3:3 for a more detailed account of how sinners look in the sight of God) are made pure, clean, and righteous in the sight of God. How is that possible? The verses that are written above tell us—we are declared righteous because the blood of Jesus Christ has been applied to us. We have accepted what Jesus did—His suffering, death, burial, and resurrection—as the payment for our sin. When we accept by faith what Jesus did for us, we are declared righteous in the sight of God. The act of justification takes place at the moment one believes in Jesus Christ as his Savior. At that moment of acceptance, God no longer sees him as a sinner, but as righteous. There is nothing in Scripture that teaches that this position of being justified can ever be changed. The totality of sin has been taken care of at the moment of salvation. As I tried to explain earlier, at that moment of salvation, God sees all of the sinner’s sin. In God’s eyes, there are no past or future sins. God sees a sinner accepting His Son as His Savior. In return, God, as He promised, declares that sinner righteous. Nothing in Scripture teaches that anything can change that declaration of righteousness.

For someone to lose his salvation would mean that God would have to declare him unrighteous. That is never mentioned in Scripture. The word unjustified cannot be found in Scripture. Read all of those verses that talk about the subject of justification. In none of those will you find anything that will describe the changing of one who is righteous back to being unrighteous. Everyone of them talk about a sinner being declared righteous, but none describe a righteous person being declared unrighteous.

Dr. C. I. Scofield says this about justification: “The believing sinner is justified because Christ, having borne his sins on the cross, has been ‘made unto him righteousness’ (I Cor 1:30). Justification originates in grace; is through the redemptive and propitiatory work of Christ, who has vindicated the law; is by faith, not works; and may be defined as the judicial act of God whereby He justly declares righteous one who believes on Jesus Christ. It is the judge Himself who thus declares. The justified believer has been in court, only to learn that nothing is laid to his charge” (Note on Romans 3:28; Scofield Reference Bible). Thanks be unto God for the truth and reality of justification. Because of Jesus Christ, and my acceptance of Him, God the Father has declared me righteous. Never again—never ever again—will I be seen as unrighteous. I have been washed in the blood and that blood has cleansed me forever. Praise the Lord! We will continue next month.

*(For the continuation of this message, please see our October 2008, November 2008, and December 2008 NewsLetters.)*