

The Old-Time Evangelistic News

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

We continue this month considering whether salvation can be lost. We answer the question with a resounding, “No!” We have examined this subject by posing the question, “Why do people teach that salvation can be lost?” We answer that question with three reasons: 1) They Misunderstand what Salvation Is; 2) They Misinterpret what Scripture Says; and 3) They are Misguided by Self and Satan. We have spent the last four issues covering what salvation really is. If one truly believes what the Bible has to say about salvation, then they cannot believe that salvation can be lost.

Now we consider the second main reason why people believe that salvation can be lost—**They Misinterpret what Scripture Says**. Many times when I have discussed this issue with people, if they quote Scripture at all, they always quote some passage out of context. Oftentimes it is an obscure passage that, to be honest, is hard to understand. Sometimes they will even talk about some Bible character that seemingly lost his salvation. However, if you examine the passages they quote, and the characters they mention, you will find that the passages either are misquoted or misinterpreted, and the characters they use for examples were either never saved to begin with, or they sinned and were chastened by God.

Judas Iscariot, Lot, and David are three characters often referred to as losing their salvation. However, Judas Iscariot is never referred to as being saved. He was chosen as an apostle in fulfillment of Scripture (Psalm 41:9 and Acts 1:16-17), but he was never saved. Jesus said in John 17:12 that He had kept all of the ones that the Father had given Him and none was lost except the son of perdition—Judas. Why was Judas lost? I John 2:19 says, “*They went*

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out from us, but they were not of us.” Judas played the part for three years, then his real heart was made known. He betrayed Christ because he was a devil (John 6:70). He did not have salvation, and then lose it. He was not saved from the beginning.

Lot is clearly called a righteous man in II Peter 2:7-8. He committed some terrible sins, but nowhere is he declared to have lost his salvation. Some like to say that David said “restore unto me thy salvation,” but in saying so, they misquote Scripture. David was a believer, and he sinned greatly, but he does not ask for salvation again. He says in Psalm 51:12, “*Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.*” You will never find an example of a person in Scripture who had salvation and then lost it. Salvation cannot be lost.

Notice with me three Wrongly Interpreted Passages. There are many others, but we will not take the time to look at all of them. These three will suffice to prove our point. The first one is II Peter 2:20-22. It says, “*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.*” At first glance this may seem hard to understand, but when the whole chapter is read, it becomes a little clearer. As verse 1 says, this passage refers to false prophets (preachers in pulpits or teachers in classrooms). They may put on a show in order to get into a position, but eventually their true colors show. Verse 1 says that they deny the Lord. Why would they do such a thing? Because they have never known the Lord. I John 4:2-3 says, “*Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God.*” These false prophets are not God’s and never were God’s because

they deny Jesus. One who is truly saved will always profess the truth of Scripture. One who is unsaved may follow for a little while, but if they ever deny Scripture, it is because they were always unsaved. The proverb quoted puts it accurately—they return to vomit because they were always a dog; they return to the mire because they were always a pig. They never were a sheep.

Matthew 7:21-23 provides the next wrongly interpreted passage. It says, *“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.”* Many quote this passage and say, “See, they were saved because they were doing these miracles, but somehow they lost it, because Jesus does not know them.” However, they miss what Jesus says. They may have been doing seemingly wonderful things, even miracles, but they were not doing them in the power of Jesus. Remember, the magicians in Egypt were able to copy some of the miracles that Moses did. Notice what Jesus said—*“I never knew you.”* He does not say that He knew them, and then cast them aside, or that He unsaved them, or that they lost it. He says very plainly, *“I **never** knew you.”* This passage does not teach that you can lose your salvation. It teaches that some are claiming to do great things for Christ when they have never been saved. We must take care when we listen to preaching. Just because they claim Christ does not mean that they know Him. I believe that a true believer will be able to discern between a true preacher and a false preacher. Be careful what you listen to and to whom you listen.

The final wrongly interpreted passage that we will consider is Galatians 5:4. In that verse Paul writes, *“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”* People will often quote the last portion of the verse and say, “See the Bible teaches that you can fall from grace.”

But they misinterpret and misunderstand what the Bible is saying there. If you understand what Galatians is about, then you will understand what this verse means. The theme of Galatians is that salvation is by grace alone. Some false teachers had come into Galatia and said that faith in Christ was not enough for salvation. They said that you must keep the works of the law. Paul combats the false teaching of works plus grace throughout the Epistle. Galatians 5:4 is saying that if works is accepted as the basis of salvation, then you are falling away from the truth that salvation is by grace. Galatians 5:4 is not teaching that you can lose your salvation. It is teaching that if you do not preach true Biblical salvation, then you have fallen away from the truth of grace.

Since we have considered three wrongly interpreted passages, let us now consider three Correctly Interpreted Passages. While some passages may be hard to understand, these three passages are very clear. We could mention many others, but I think that these are the best. If you take these verses for what they say, there is no way that you can believe that you can lose your salvation. Interpret the difficult passages in the light of these clear passages, and then the difficult passages will become easier to understand. If you still cannot understand the difficult ones, then focus upon these. Read them, pray over them, and find comfort in them.

The first correctly interpreted passage is John 10:27-29. In this discourse on the Good Shepherd, Jesus says, *“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.”* These are wonderful, reassuring verses! Notice what Jesus says—*“I give unto them eternal life.”* It is a life which cannot and does not end. He also emphasizes that eternal life when He says, *“And they shall never perish.”* This is a double negative in the Greek language. It is very emphatic. We could phrase it like this: “and they shall never, never perish” or “they shall in no wise perish.” Hallelujah!

Salvation is eternal. Once I come to Christ, I will never perish. How can one teach that salvation can be lost when Jesus says that His sheep—His believers—can never perish? It would seem that they call Jesus a liar. Rest comfortably believer. You are safe forever with Christ. Salvation cannot be lost!

A second passage that proves that salvation cannot be lost is Romans 8:35-39. The Holy Ghost tells us through Paul, *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Paul says exactly what the Lord said in John 10:27-29. He asks the question as to what will separate us from the love of Christ, or what will cause us to lose our salvation. He responds with a list of 10 things that cannot separate us from the love of Christ or the love God. These are 10 things that cannot make us lose our salvation. We are safe in Christ for all of eternity.

The last verses that we will consider come from John 3. In John 3:16, Jesus says, *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”* John the Baptist uses similar language in John 3:36. He says, *“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”* These are wonderful thoughts to ponder. Jesus says that one who believes in Him will not perish, but will live forever. John the Baptist says that if one believes on Jesus they have—right now, not just in the future—everlasting life. Beloved, rest on the words of Jesus. If you are His, you are His forever. You cannot, and will not, be lost.

We have considered two reasons why people teach that salvation can be lost. Now we come to the third reason—**They are Misguided by Self and Satan**. Satan loves to make believers doubt. If he can make them doubt, then they will not be effective for Christ. Self and Satan Cause Doubt. Ephesians 4:14 says, *“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”* Those who doubt will be tossed to and fro. If one has assurance in Christ, they will be firm in their living for Christ.

Self and Satan also Cause Despondency. Hebrews 13:9 says, *“Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines.”* This is very similar to the passage in Ephesians, but I think it takes it a step further. The doctrines are described as “divers and strange.” If one is not settled in Christ, then he will be liable to follow anything, no matter how contrary to Scripture it may be. Believer, make your calling and election sure. Be certain of your salvation that you might not grow despondent.

Last, Self and Satan Culminate in Defeat. I Corinthians 9:26-27 talks about fighting and running. If we are not sure of our salvation, we will lose the fight and the race that we are in. We cannot fight effectively if we do not know if we are saved, or if we have to worry if we can lose it. II Timothy 2:21 describes how we can be a fit vessel *“meet for the master’s use.”* If we constantly struggle and worry about our salvation, we will not be that fit vessel. We will be defeated Christians, not fit for the master’s use. May we not be defeated. May we have confidence in Christ and be used for Him. May we remember that salvation cannot be lost!

I close with these Final Thoughts. They reemphasize what I have tried to say. May God help us see the truth from His Word.

- 1) The Bible does not teach eradication of the sin nature—you will sin after you are saved (I John 1:8).
- 2) The Bible teaches that one will change after salvation—you

will not live like you did before you were saved (II Cor 5:17).

- 3) The Bible teaches that one cannot use his salvation as an excuse to sin (Rom 6:1-2).
- 4) The Bible teaches that any combination of works plus grace is impossible—either it is all of works or it is all of grace; if you started out with grace, grace must keep you—not your works (Rom 11:6).
- 5) The Bible teaches that you can know that you are saved—you do not have to worry if you are saved—you can know it (I John 5:13).
- 6) The Bible teaches that not all who profess truly possess (Mat 7:21-23; II Peter 2:1; I John 4:1; Jude 4).

I pray that this message has been of help and encouragement to you. Many have commented on this message. May the Lord use it to help others see the truth of His Word—Salvation Cannot Be Lost!