



**Can A Christian  
Lose  
His Or Her  
Salvation?**

by  
Norton M. Rainey, Jr.



# CAN A CHRISTIAN LOSE HIS OR HER SALVATION?

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most frequently asked questions is whether a Christian can lose his/her salvation. We want to address this question in several different ways. In this tract we want to ask and answer a number of questions whose answers are found in the Bible.

Examples of some of those questions are: How secure is one's salvation? How definite is the Bible, God's Word, regarding one's salvation? Once we believe and are saved – is it permanent? Is our salvation: Probational? Based on works? Maintained by works? And, how important is it to know this doctrine?

We can lose our salvation, or we cannot lose it. You cannot have it both ways – either we can or we cannot! The scriptures do not contradict themselves.

*"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." **John 8:32 NKJV***

*“..... true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.” **John 4:23 NKJV***

Let us know the “Truth.” God wants us to know!

Many who do not believe that you can lose your salvation use the phrase “Security of the Believer” to describe their position. Throughout this tract, we will use this descriptive phrase.

D. L. Moody spoke about using plain and clear passages of scripture to interpret the Bible, in contrast to obscure passages. We will use clear passages in this tract.

The design of this tract is not to address scriptures that people bring up to show that a believer can lose his or her salvation. Our focus is to look at plain passages. We believe the scriptures in this tract are clear and to the point. If one believes that scriptures do not self-contradict, then the scriptures that may seem to convey something different must be misunderstood. Obscure passages are to be understood in light of the clear passages. We believe we have done so in this tract.

Furthermore, in this particular tract, we are dealing with the issue of true believers in Christ. We are not dealing with the question of whether someone is truly saved. That is another issue.

Let us go further:

### **Is One’s Salvation Secure?**

*“And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My*

*hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand." **John 10:28-29 NKJV***

Let us examine this passage. **John 10:28** speaks to eternal life. What does “*eternal*” mean? Does it mean “temporary,” “conditional,” or “probational” life?

The text is remarkably clear. “Eternal” is without end. You would have to distort the word “eternal” to come to any other conclusion. It means that we have life without end. You would have to twist or change the meaning of “eternal” for it to mean anything else. And notice that we are speaking about eternal life. In the text, “life” means “salvation.” It means “life through Jesus Christ.” Let us validate the meaning, using the Word of God.

Jesus said, “.... *I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*” **John 10:10, NKJV**

The abundant life begins with a secure life.  
Eternal life starts with security.

“*And this is eternal life, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom You have sent.*” **John 17:3 KJV**

We can know we have eternal life by accepting Christ and knowing Christ.

“*And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.*” **1 John 5:11-12 NKJV**

These verses and others have to do with eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Let us go further:

**John 10:28** (cited earlier) states that those who have eternal life shall not perish. What does “shall not perish” mean? Was John using hyperbole, or was he being literal? Can you come to any other conclusion than that this eternal life Jesus talked about cannot be destroyed or done away with?

This may be the strongest language a writer could use to convey a thought, idea, or concept. It is clear and to the point. This is doctrine. This is instruction and teaching.

Let us go on:

According to **John 10:28**, no one or none can pluck a believer out of the hand of Christ. We might add that one cannot take one’s self out of eternal life. We cannot undo our eternal life by any act we could ever commit. A Christian cannot be removed from this realm of eternal life. Eternal life is eternal! And the text re-states this thought, that a person who has eternal life cannot be snatched or plucked out of the Father’s hand. Therefore, we have the protection of the Son and the Father. We have security. We are secure in Christ and the Father, eternally. And then, we read that we are also sealed by the Holy Spirit eternally:

*“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by Whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”*  
**Ephesians 4:30 NKJV**

A person who is saved has eternal life, and is protected by the Trinity, once for all. This relationship cannot be reversed. Our salvation is secured by the Godhead, the Three Persons of the Trinity.

One more point: None or no one can pluck themselves out of God's hand. Many think they can be snatched out. Many teach that you can lose your faith or take yourself out, or even jump out of your salvation. Do the scriptures say that is possible? It says, "...no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand," and that includes you. If you could, that would make you stronger than God Himself.

Let us go further:

### **Can We Be Cast Out Of The Family?**

*"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." **John 6:37-39 NKJV***

We see that once we come to know the Lord, we will never be rejected or cast out of the Family of God. Once we are born into the "kingdom of His dear Son", we will not be thrown out.

*"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." **Colossians 1:13 KJV***

In no way or manner will a child of God be thrown out or driven away. Naturally speaking, think about a child that feels that he or she could be cast out of his/her home. That child would grow up feeling very insecure. The child who might find Dad drunk or abusive in the family; that child would be insecure. Right?

Well, God wants us to feel secure. God wants us to know we are safe and secure and loved unconditionally. Believers should have assurance. God does not want us to feel He is holding a hammer over our heads, or that he wants to “get us.” He is not vindictive.

Once we become His child, we are always in the Family of God.

*“If God is for us, who can be against us?”*  
**Romans 8:31 NKJV**

Though He will discipline, correct and rebuke us when necessary, He is for us! He wants us to be assured of our salvation. **John 6:39** (cited earlier) states that those who belong to Him will not be lost, “even when we are faithless.” (**II Timothy 2:13**)

**John 6:39** states that He will lose nothing. What does “nothing” mean? To what does “nothing” refer? To whom does “nothing” refer? It refers to those who are saved. He will not lose any of those who have believed. “Nothing” refers to those referenced in this verse. Jesus will lose no believer.

A child in the natural may leave home or even be thrown out; however, a child cannot be unborn out of a family. A child will always have the flesh and blood of the organic parents.

Spiritually, we cannot be unborn out of the Family of God. Once we are born again, we cannot undo the relationship we have through Jesus. We have been given to Him (**John 6:39**) and He loses none of those who believe on Him. He loses none who come to Him. We have eternal life (**John 10:28**) or everlasting life. (**John 6:40**)



*“He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” **John 3:36 NKJV***

How does that verse make you feel? Safe and secure, or insecure and shaky, as if you are on probation?

Everlasting life is eternal life through Jesus Christ. We are not on probation. We do not have a conditional salvation. Believers did nothing at all to merit everlasting life, and no merit will maintain or sustain our eternal life.

There were no rules to be kept nor requirements involved when we were born again. These plain verses of scripture state emphatically that we are saved by believing. We have eternal life by faith alone. We have everlasting life by simple acceptance of Jesus and His finished work.

### **Will God Ever Leave Us?**

*“Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” **Hebrews 13:5 NKJV***

Once we are redeemed from our sins, will God leave us? We have established that He will not cast us out, and we cannot be snatched out of His hand. Now, this text says plainly that He will never leave us. Is there something we can do to provoke Him to leave us? Is there a way we can become separated from God? Is there a way to lose our salvation?

*“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 Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who 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 created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” **Romans 8:35-39 NKJV***

God says in His Word that He will not leave us. Now, He states clearly that nothing can separate us from His love. In the text, we find an exhaustive list of things that cannot separate us from our Savior. Can you name something that will?

### **Can We Reverse Regeneration (Salvation)?**

*“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” **John 5:24 NKJV***

Can our regeneration be reversed? This is certainly a valid question for any believer to ask. And, is there anything a believer can do to reverse his/her salvation?

Eternal life has to do with passing from death to life. There is no condemnation to the person who puts his faith in Christ. (**Romans 8:1**) He will never have to stand before the Great White Throne of God,

because the penalty of sin has passed and has been done away with for the “born again” believer. The text says he has already passed over out of death into life. This life is eternal, everlasting, and all past tense.

Just as physical birth into the world cannot be reversed, neither can we reverse our salvation (regeneration) spiritually. When a child is born into a family, the child cannot be unborn. Neither can a child born physically give back his birth to the parents. The same is true spiritually. If we could lose our salvation, then we would be passing into judgment.

*"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life."* **John 5:24 NKJV**

Once we believe, according to this verse, we will not be placed in judgment. We have eternal life, or an endless life. When we become a new creation through Christ, we are eternally saved, and there is no judgment. (**II Corinthians 5:17**) If we could somehow not be regenerated any longer after our regeneration, that judgment would contradict this verse and the Word of God.

Notice, “Shall not come into judgment.” SHALL NOT.

Clear enough!

## **Are Works Required For Salvation?**

*“Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?”*  
***Galatians 3:3 NKJV***

Many believe that we are saved by faith, and then we are perfected by our works. We are born again, and yet we must live in a certain way to maintain our position in the Family of God. They say our salvation is secured by Christian living, or the works of our life. We would characterize such a theology or doctrine as a “Works Righteousness.” Our redemption would be predicated on what a believer does or does not do. We call that “works.”

What does the Word declare?

*“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,”* ***Titus 3:5 NKJV***

The Word clearly states, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done.” Notice the following verses:

*“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”* ***Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV***

We see that we are not saved nor kept by works.

*“For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the*

*ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,”*  
**Romans 4:3-5 NKJV**

The Galatians lapsed back into a “works righteousness.” The Judaizers followed the Apostle Paul and taught the Galatians that they had to keep the Law of Moses. The Law is “works.” The Law is what we do or don’t do. The Law is performance. (**Galatians 3:3**)

Paul rebuked those believers for departing from his message of Grace. This “works righteousness” was foolishness, and Paul said that those who preached another gospel from the one he preached should be accursed. (**Galatians 1:9**)

That is strong language. These are clear words to communicate Paul’s displeasure with those false teachers and legalists who put God’s people under a yoke of bondage.

*“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.” Galatians 5:1 NKJV*

“Works righteousness” for salvation is a yoke of bondage.

*“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.” Galatians 2:16 NKJV*

How could anything be more clear? It is all by faith in Christ and not by works. Read the text again. It is so very clear! We did not merit eternal life and

we cannot demerit eternal life. Believers have everlasting life, not by works of righteousness.

Believers cannot secure everlasting life through good works. The redeemed are secure. We have security. The security of the believer is based on faith alone. (**Galatians 3:11**)

Thank God for the assurance of our salvation. There is security for the child of God!

There is more!

*“Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.”* **Romans 3:27-28 NKJV**

We are saved and kept by grace apart from works. As we stated previously, obscure passages must be understood in the light of plain scriptures, and not the other way around. If a person can do anything or perform in a certain way to keep saved, then he is kept by works. What we would do or not do would be the basis for initial salvation, and for continuing our salvation.

If we did nothing to earn our salvation, how can we maintain or earn our salvation going forward?

If a born again believer could be lost by doing or not doing anything, that would be a basis for boasting about your retention of your salvation by the works you did.

*“For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.”* **Romans. 4:2 NKJV**

How can we complete what we did not start? (**Romans 8:3; Galatians 2:21; Acts 13:39**) Wouldn't

that be saying our eternal life was incomplete? We need to agree with God's Word that eternal life is eternal through Jesus and the work He did at Calvary.

Can you lose your salvation because of your works? The Bible does not teach a "works righteousness" for salvation, nor retention of our salvation by works. We repeat:

*"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." **Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV***

Our salvation is a gift, and not of our own doing or works.

There are the ordained works in which we are to walk after salvation. These prepared works, which God planned beforehand, have to do with rewards. (**Revelation 22:10; I Corinthians 3:8-15**)

There is an inheritance for the saints of God separate and apart from salvation.

*"Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them." **Galatians 3:12 NKJV***

The keeping of the Law is works (**I Corinthians 15:56**) because the Law is not of faith.

*"This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" **Galatians 3:2 NKJV***

We are to live by faith. (**Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Habakkuk 2:4**) Faith excludes works for the keeping of one's salvation.

If there were anything we could do to add to our salvation or make it more certain, then the finished

work of Christ on the cross would not be finished! It would be incomplete.

*“And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.”* **Romans 11:6 NKJV**

May we see that our redemption has nothing at all to do with works or the Law, nor does the maintaining of our salvation. (**Romans 10:4**) Christ is our all-sufficiency! We see works come into play after we are saved, but these works have to do with rewards. (**Revelation 22:12; I Corinthians 1:8, 14**)

### **Who Lost Their Salvation?**

If a true Christian can lose his/her salvation, then tell me who in the Bible ever lost their salvation? People will point to Judas as an example, and yet Jesus knew all about Judas.

*“Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spoke of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.”* **John 6:70-71 KJV**

It was prophesied in the Old Testament that one would betray the Lord. (**Psalms 41:9**) Jesus knew about Judas before the foundation of the world. Judas was never saved; he was a dirty man doing a dirty job.



## No Condemnation

*“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.” **Romans 8:1 NKJV***

There is no condemnation to those who have put their faith in Jesus. If we are not condemned, how can we lose our salvation? We can know we have eternal life.

*“These things have I written unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God; that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.” **1 John 5:13 NKJV***

## CONCLUSION

Based on these, and a myriad of other verses in God’s Word, we can have full assurance in our “once and for all” salvation!

Security produces maturity!

Believers can grow and mature because we know we are secure. We cannot grow in legality. (**II Peter 3:18**) We will never be cast out of the Family of God. Nothing will separate us from God. (**Romans 8:35-39**) He is a loving, caring Father Who will never leave us. Let us read **Hebrews 13:5** in the Amplified Bible:

*“.... He [God] Himself has said, I will not in any way fail you nor give you up nor leave you without support. [I will] not, [I will] not, [I will] not in any*

*degree leave you helpless nor forsake nor let [you] down (relax My hold on you)! [Assuredly not!]*  
**Hebrews 13:5 AMP**

Let us fully embrace the doctrine of the security of the believer. May we live a spiritual life and not be carnal.

**(I Corinthians 3:1, 3)** May we grow in grace that encompasses this teaching of our security in Christ. Believers need to know, based on the scriptures, that we cannot lose our salvation. This knowledge is key for maturity.

Why cling to a doctrine that the Word of God does not teach?

Why cling to a false doctrine that a believer can lose his or her salvation? **(II Timothy 4:3)**

Why cling to the Law, which condemns and produces death? **(I Corinthians 3:7, 9)**

Why cling to the letter of the Law that kills? **(I Corinthians 3:6)**

Now is the time to accept the completed work of Jesus at the cross!

*“For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”* **2 Corinthians 6:2 NKJV**

Turn away from man’s wisdom. **(I Corinthians 3:9)**

*“Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?”*  
**Galatians 3:3 NKJV**

*“... made perfect.”* If indeed we could do anything to add to our salvation or keep our salvation,

then being born again is incomplete. If our doing or not doing has anything at all to do with losing our salvation, then our acceptance of Christ would be insufficient. The words “made perfect” from ***Galatians 3:3*** would be meaningless, because something else would be required for fulfillment or completion.

It is important to know the truth regarding this doctrine.

Why? Because we cannot grow without knowing this fact.

*“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.” 2 Peter 3:14 NKJV*

This doctrine has to do with knowing the grace of God. Let us not make the foolish statement that this doctrine is not important. We need assurance! We need security! We need to know we are saved once and for all. Our salvation is complete through the finished work of Christ at Calvary.

***A Christian cannot lose his/her salvation!***

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FOOTNOTE: For further reading on this subject view  
or download the following tracts from the  
Abundant Grace Fellowship Web Site  
[www.agfwheatridgeco.com](http://www.agfwheatridgeco.com)

“Seven Bible Reasons Why the Believer is  
Eternally Secure”

“Blessed Assurance”

“Bible Doctrine” (pages 2-3, 5-7)

“Works Before Salvation and Works After  
Salvation”

“In Christ”

For more tracts and teachings on this and many other Bible doctrines, please, contact us at:

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