

Can a Soul Once Saved Be Lost? – Asaolu O. S. (asaolu@yahoo.com)

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Introduction: This lesson is designed to address the doctrine of ‘Once Saved, Always Saved’ attributed to Calvin. The premise is that once a person is saved, such can never lose his salvation because s/he was predestined unto it and is kept by an irresistible grace irrespective of his/her freewill or actions! This theory is based on individual election and predestination which we have refuted in part 1. **Some proof texts for the position include John 3:16, John 10:28, Romans 8:1ff** Prelude: Why and when is one saved? Because such is lost in sin, saved when s/he obeys the gospel in accepting the lordship of Christ. **If one does something to be saved THEN one can UNDO it! Originally, Adam and Eve were in saved state but they were not always saved... they became lost when beguiled by the serpent.**

The Doctrine Stated And Refuted

The doctrine stated: “They whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved” (Westminster Confession, Chapter XVII, Section 1).

Believe- John 12:37-43, Rm 10:16; 6:17

Romans 8: 1,11-12 is pertinent for those to whom Roman 8:35-39 is addressed.

God, who is all-powerful, cannot fail to provide the heavenly home He has promised to all those who exercise trust and faith in His Son Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Timothy 1:12). Although God’s omnipotence effectively assures our salvation, the fact remains that we can live our lives here on this earth in such a way as to lose that which God’s faithfulness guarantees. For example, in Revelation 2:10, the Lord assures a “crown of life” only to those who remain “faithful unto death.” In 1 Corinthians 4:2, the apostle Paul makes it clear that “faithfulness” is the true test of our stewardship to Christ. In his letter to the Ephesian church, Paul addresses the “*saints which are at Ephesus*” and the “*faithful in Christ Jesus*” (Ephesians 1:1).

These are not two different groups. The saints are those who are faithful in Christ Jesus. The same is true at Colosse (cf. Colossians 1:1). This is why Paul exhorted Christians everywhere to “continue in the faith” (Acts 14:22). The word of God makes it clear that eternal salvation in heaven is dependent upon our continued faithfulness to Christ (cf. Colossians 1:20-23). “*If you continue in the faith*” implies that turning from the faith is certainly possible. In fact, in Galatians 5:4, the apostle Paul makes it clear that a child of God can fall from grace, something

In Philippians 2:12, the apostle Paul wrote, “*Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*” The apostle is not saying that every man is left to his own devices with regard to salvation, as if salvation were totally dependent upon man. On the contrary, salvation is, first and foremost, dependent upon the grace of God. Man, in spite of anything he might do, cannot, without God’s unmerited favor, save himself. The provision of salvation is totally of God. Nevertheless, man, in order to be saved, is under obligation to do something. Consequently, when man does whatever it is he is required to do, he is said to be saving himself (cf. Acts 2:40, KJV). What, then, is man required to do? Quite simply, he is required to obey God!

Acts 2:38). In other words, *Christ is the author of eternal salvation unto all those who obey Him* (cf. Hebrews 5:9). If we acknowledge Jesus as Lord and obey Him, He will save us from our past sins. In addition, in order to stay saved, we must continue to serve Him faithfully. The Christian works out his own salvation by reverently and carefully following the Lord’s preceptive will. In doing so, he “proves what is that good and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:2).

The idea that one cannot be cast off forever is not taught in the Scriptures. In his wise counsel to his son Solomon, David warned:

As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever (1 Chronicles 28:9).

Then, in Ezekiel 18:24 it is said: But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall

die. Then, in Matthew 10:22, Jesus said, “**But he who endures to the end will be saved.**” Why did He say this? Is not the clear implication that if we do not endure we will be lost? Do Jesus’ words not imply that it is possible not to endure to the end? The answer to these questions appears to be obvious: One who has been saved can fail to endure to the end and, if he does, he will be lost! This is exactly the same message Jesus taught in Matthew 24:13.

In John 15:2, He said, “*Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.*” In verse 6,

He continues, “*If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.*” Now, does this sound like the saved cannot be lost? Again, the answer is obvious. Of course, this is exactly what the apostle Paul taught: For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off (Romans 11:21- 22). The apostle Paul was not a Calvinist either! In fact, the apostle Paul was very much aware that if he did not discipline his own body and keep it under subjection that he himself could be a “castaway,” and this after having preached the gospel to others (cf. 1 Corinthians 9:26-27, KJV). And listen to what Paul said to the church at Corinth: “Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:1-2). Paul said they heard the gospel, believed it, stood in it, and were saved by it, but that they needed to continue to hold fast, unless they had believed in vain, in which case they would, by implication, become unsaved or lost.

Conclusion: There are numerous warnings against becoming lost such as Gal 5:4, 1 Tim 1:19-20, 2 Pet 2:20-22, **Only God knows the point one crosses from life to death, proper disfellowship is a visible sign for men.**

Jude 1:5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day

1 Corinthians 9:23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.