



## A Discussion About “Once Saved, Always Saved” and “Christians Can Lose Salvation”

By Karen Sue Nyquist

**Salvation is a covenant between God and man that has conditions, requirements.** This article will present God's requirements for salvation (they are underlined). It is written as a conversation, expressing two opposing views on salvation. The 1st opinion is that once a Christian is saved, they are always saved. The 2nd opinion is that if they don't continue to meet God's conditions, Christians can lose salvation. We will see what the Bible says.

**1. God said, “I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now chose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to His voice (*obey*), and hold fast to Him”** (Deuteronomy 30:19-20). God anointed people to tell us more of His conditions for salvation. John the Baptist said to believe the gospel (Mark 1:15). Peter said to repent, be baptized, and receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Paul said to receive Christ Jesus the Lord (Colossians 2:6). The Lord Jesus Christ said, “And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved” (Matthew 24:12-13). Christians make choices about these conditions, which either strengthen or weaken their salvation, but can Christians lose their salvation? Let's see what the Bible says.

**2. 1st - We can't lose our salvation because the Bible say that nothing can separate us from God's love. 2nd -** Well, Paul did write, “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ... shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39). If we turn away from Jesus, God still loves us. He loves the whole world (John 3:16). God's “not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9), yet many are not saved, will die, and go to hell. **God's covenants always have conditions that He expects us to keep. One is that we must abide in or stay in Jesus** (John 15:6).

**3. 1st - Also, the Bible says that God'll never leave us. 2nd -** You're right! “For He Himself (*God*) has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you’” (Hebrews 13:4-5). But, Paul also warned, “Beware, brethren (*Christians*), lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, ... lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence (*faith*) steadfast to the end” (Hebrews 3:12-14). No, God won't leave a believer, **but some are deceived by sinning, lose their faith, then they leave God.**

**4. 1st - But Christians' names are written in the Book of Life. 2nd -** Yes, but John wrote, “and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life” (Revelation 22:19). **So, God can erase our names.** But Jesus said Christians could do 4 things, to prevent that. **a) Remember** therefore how you have received and heard (*the gospel*); **b) hold fast (*to God and the gospel*)** and **c) repent (*stop sinning*)** ... **d) He who overcomes (*temptations, etc.*) shall be clothed in white garments (*represents righteousness*), and I will not blot out (*erase*) his name from the Book of Life” (Revelation 3:2-5). Let's ask ourselves, “Am I meeting God's conditions, His requirements?”**

**5. 1st - Since, we've been sealed with the Holy Spirit, we're going to heaven - 2nd -** The Bible says, “And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, Who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption ...” (Ephesians 1:13-14 NIV). Jesus wants to redeem us, either at our death or at the rapture, whichever comes first. A Christian can choose to turn away from Jesus, losing the Holy Spirit, salvation, and heaven. Some even turn against Jesus (read Hebrews 4:4-6). God took the Holy Spirit away from King Saul, for disobedience. David saw that and later repented of his own sin praying, “And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me” (Psalm 51:11). **God can take back His deposit, the Holy Spirit, before our redemption, if we turn away from obeying Him to a life of disobedience.** We can't earn salvation or buy it, but salvation does have basic requirements.

**6. 1st - But doesn't the Bible say that God can keep us saved? 2nd -** God offers us “an inheritance ... that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:4-5). “He (*Jesus*) became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” (Hebrews 5:9). God offers us His power, grace, and forgiveness, to help us to fulfill these conditions: keep our faith for salvation to the end and obey God. We can choose to accept or reject His help.

**7. 1st - Since we are born again Christians, we already have eternal life. 2nd -** The Bible does say, **a) “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”** (Romans 6:23). **b) “For the gifts (*talents and blessings*) and the calling of God are irrevocable”** (Romans 11:29). **c) Jesus explained, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone**



snatch them out of My hand” (John 10:27-28). No one can snatch us away, but like sheep, we can stray away, choose to live a life of sin, refuse to obey, and to not continue following Jesus. Paul explained even more, “But if we (*Christians*) walk in the light as He (*Jesus*) is in the light, ... the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. ... If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1John 1:7,9). **But Jesus and Paul said we must fulfill these conditions: continue following Jesus, and confessing with repentance if we sin, to have eternal life.**

**8. 1st - Maybe those people, who stop following Jesus, weren't truly saved and just thought they were? 2nd -** Jesus mentions those too. “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” (Matthew 7:22-23). **Jesus never was their Lord, nor were they obeying God.** Jesus also mentioned those who were saved and then left God in “The Parable of the Sower” (Matthew 13:3-9,18-23).

**9. 1st - What if a Christian believes in Jesus but turns to a lifestyle of sin without repenting? 2nd -** Paul wrote to Christians: “But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints (*Christians*) ... this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words (*such as “once saved, always saved”*), for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience” (Ephesians 5:3, 5-6). “Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons” (1 Timothy 4:1). **Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.**” (1 Corinthians 6:9). **These aren't obeying, not repenting, nor following Jesus.**

**10. 1st - So what happens to a Christian who turns away from following Jesus Christ? 2nd -**“Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: **on those who fell**, severity; but toward you (*who follow Jesus*), goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise **you also will be cut off**” (Romans 11:22). **The Bible doesn't support “once saved, always saved.”** Paul tells us to help Christians repent and return to Jesus. “Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins” (James 5:19-20).

**11. 1st - Paul was concerned about others' salvation, what about his own? 2nd -** Paul was concerned about both, just as we should be. **a)** He said, “But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection (*refusing a life of sin*), lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified” (1 Corinthians 9:27). **b)** “... by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word (gospel) ... Otherwise, you have believed in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:2 NIV). **c)** “For the time *has come* for judgment to begin at the house of God (*church*); and *if it begins* with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?” (1 Peter 4:17-18). **d)** So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!” (1 Corinthians 10:12). **e)** “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed,...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12-13). **God won't force us, but as we cooperate with God, His grace and Holy Spirit are working to help us keep our faith, obey, confess and repent of sin, and follow Jesus.** Loving God is rewarding; but “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Prov.9:10).

**12. 1st - Does God want Christians who've lost their salvation to return to Him? 2nd - Yes!** Jesus told the parable of the prodigal son, who left his father (*God*) and went into a lifestyle of sin. When he repented and returned, his father who had been watching for Him, ran to him, hugged and kissed him, welcoming him back. He said, “for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found” (Luke 15:11-32). That's what God'll say if we return.

**13. How is your relationship with God?** Are you a Christian? Are you still following Jesus or have you left Him and been living a life of disobedience? If you are repentant and ready, you can give your life to Him for the first time, or you can return and rededicate your life to Him.

**14. Suggested Prayer:** “Jesus, I believe You are the Son of God, You died for my sins, then rose from the dead. I repent of my sins. I am ready to follow and obey You. Thank You for loving me and dying for me. I confess You as my Lord and Savior and will live for You. AMEN!”

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