

Once Saved, Always Saved

Steve Hogan – January 29, 2023

Hope Bible Church of Tampa

ChristsinKingdom.org

Today I want to talk about a very important subject, the subject of salvation. And when we talk about salvation, we're talking about being spiritually saved, about being saved from sin, death, and hell. And people who are saved are children of God, they're forgiven of their sins, they're righteous, they're going to heaven when they die, and they'll receive a glorified body. Those who aren't saved, who don't possess salvation are children of the devil, are guilty in their sins, are unrighteous before God, and are going to hell when they die.

One of the best passages on salvation is Rom. 3:20-28. Now what does it tell us?

- Rom. 3:20 – This says that a person is not justified, does not gain salvation by doing the works of the Law, by doing what God commands us to do, and that's because no person can perfectly keep the Law. All people are sinners and are unable to keep God's law, except Jesus. Gal 3:24 says the main purpose of the Law is to show us that we're sinners.

Titus 3:5. Now this too tells us that salvation is not obtained by the Law, and that there are no good deeds or works we can do that will result in us being saved.

Throughout history, all kinds of people and all kinds of religions have stated that you need to do some kind of good works to get saved. But that's not true, that's not what God says. Gal. 3:10-11, Eph. 2:8-9, Phil. 3:19, 2 Tim. 1:9

- Rom. 3:21 - This also tells us that righteousness is apart from the Law.

The Law and the Prophets, which are in the Old Testament, make this clear, that we're not saved by works, but by faith. Gen. 15, Isaiah 53

Vs. 22 – This phrase, “*the righteousness of God*”, is a very important phrase, for if we have God's righteousness, then we're as righteous as God, and we're not guilty, but rather, we've been forgiven of our sins, we're justified, we're completely holy. How does a person get this righteousness? It's not by our works but by faith in Christ, by trusting in His work for us, by believing His death on the cross was sufficient to pay for our sins, which resulted in Christ saving us from our sins, and God forgiving all our sins and declaring us righteous. Acts 4:12, Jn. 14:6

It says “*there is no distinction.*” This means there aren't different ways to get saved – there's only one way, and that's by faith in Christ. People say there are all kinds of ways to get saved, to get to heaven, but the truth is that's there's only one way to be saved, and that's through Christ and His death and resurrection. And the results of being saved are the same for every person, we're forgiven of our sins, we have the righteousness of God, and we are children of God.

Vs. 23. There's also no distinction among sinners - all people are sinners. No person, no matter who he is, no matter what family he is in, or what color he is, or church he belongs to, has an advantage over someone else. Every person is a sinner and stands guilty before God, His Creator, and is accountable to God for all his sins. Rom. 14:12 - Eph. 2:1, Ez. 18:4. The consequences of a person's sin is that he dies. 1st, there's spiritual death, he's spiritually separated from God. 2nd, there's physical death, he physically dies, and his soul is separated from his body. 3rd, there's eternal death, which means that a person who remains unsaved is separated from God forever. Matt. 25:41, 46 - Rom. 6:23. Again we see that our problem is sin which results in death, and that the only answer is Jesus Christ. But why Jesus Christ, what did He do that saves us from sin, death, and hell? Rom. 3:24-25 tells us.

Rom. 3:24. Again, we see that it's because of Jesus Christ that we're saved, that we're justified. Now the word justified and the word righteous are from the same Greek word, and mean the same thing. A person who's justified is righteous in the sight of God and, in fact, has God's righteousness - he's perfectly holy, just like God is perfectly holy.

Then we understand that being justified, having this righteousness, is a gift from God. Rom. 6:23. There's nothing we can do to become justified, but it's what Jesus Christ does for us. And God sees what Christ does for us and therefore declares us righteous. Being made righteous, being justified is a legal term. When a judge in a court of law officially declares someone righteous, He's saying that person is innocent of all charges. And God is the One who officially declares us righteous, as innocent of all charges.

It goes on to say this gift is by God's grace. And grace is a big word, for it speaks of God's resources made freely available to us. For example, God's power, love, goodness, mercy, etc., are all found in God's grace, all come from His grace. And all aspects of our salvation are rooted in and dependent on God's grace. Everyone of Paul's epistles start and conclude with him saying the word "*grace.*" And in 1 Cor. 15:10, Paul says, "*I am what I am by the grace of God.*" - 2 Cor. 9:8 - "*God is able to make all grace abound to you so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.*" So it's clear that God's grace is essential for salvation and for every aspect of your Christian life.

Eph. 2:8-9 - This too says salvation is by God's grace and is a gift to us. That means we can't work for it, can't earn it, can't pay for it, and don't deserve it. A gift

By how do we get God's grace? It's "*through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.*" Now two words are translated redemption. The first word means to purchase or to buy. The other word, the one used here, means deliverance. So Christ's death was payment for our sins, and enabled God to buy us, to purchase us out of our slavery to sin, and to deliver us from our sins. Since Christ died and paid the penalty for our sins, then God could redeem us, and He did in fact redeem us. Gal 3:13, 4:5; Col. 1:12-14

Romans 3:25. We see that Christ's death wasn't hidden, it was a public death. What God did for us was out in the open, on full display - there were 1000's people who saw Christ hanging there and dying on that cross. Now this word, "*propitiation*" means God was totally satisfied by what Christ did for us, that Christ shed His blood for us, that He died to pay for all our sins. Rom. 5:8

And Christ's death for us demonstrates God's love for us, and also His righteousness. That God is righteous means He has to punish all sin, He can't just let it go, He can't excuse it, He can't ignore it. He can't just forget about it. God's plan was brilliant and costly, for He had Jesus, His own Son, die for us so as to pay for our sins. And because of that, God could declare us righteous, He could justify us.
- This is a critical truth, that God, out of His love for us, punished His own Son, and was satisfied by what Christ did for all who repent of their sins and believe in Him.

Rom. 3:26. Again, we read about the demonstration of God's righteousness. God is righteous, He is holy, and He wanted His righteousness to be visible, to be made known, and as I just said, it was, for Christ's death was public, was clearly seen.
- That Christ was raised from the dead was also obvious, was clearly established, for His body wasn't in the tomb, and in fact, Christ revealed Himself to 100's of people. What Christ did affects every single person in the world, both believers and unbelievers. If people believe in Jesus, they are made righteous, and if they don't believe in Jesus, then they remain unrighteous. Acts 17:30-31, 2 Cor. 5:21, 1 John 5:11-13

And either a person believes in Christ and is declared righteous and becomes a child of God and goes to heaven, or he doesn't believe in Christ, and he is declared unrighteous and remains a child of the devil and goes to hell. Eph. 1:4
So God is just, He is perfectly righteous. And only He can justify a person, can make him righteous, and all those who put their faith in Jesus Christ are made righteous by God. 1 Peter 3:18, 2 Cor. 5:21, Gal. 2-4, Rom. 4:1-5

Rom. 3:27-28. That God saves us from sin and death should greatly humble us, for we did nothing to gain salvation, to be made righteous. We should boast in God, we should forever give glory to God for what He did for us, for His amazing work of salvation.

Now I want to talk about whether a Christian can lose his salvation, whether he can go from being saved to being unsaved. There are many people and churches that believe you can lose your salvation. But you can't lose it. Let me explain.

- Let's say a Christian commits a grievous sin, and because of that sin, he thinks he lost his salvation. But Christ died and paid for that sin, and so he was forgiven of it at the point he was saved. To say we can lose our salvation is saying that Christ's work on the cross wasn't sufficient to pay the penalty for all our sins, but it was. Jesus Christ, when He was on the cross, died and paid the penalty for all your sins, not just some of them. Just before Christ died on the cross, He said, "*It is finished,*" meaning the work to pay for your sins was finished, was completed, and nothing more needed to be done to secure your salvation. Col. 2:13-14

Eph. 1:4-7. God chose us, God predestined us to get saved. There's nothing here that even hints that we can get saved and then lose our salvation. God decided in eternity past to save certain people, and He doesn't change His mind and reverse His decision.

- And it says we become children of God. Losing our salvation means we become His child one day, but then another day, because of some sin, we are not His child. But that can't happen. Once we're His child, we're always His child. It says we're redeemed, and once we're redeemed, we're delivered from our sin, and we can't be unredeemed. We can't be redeemed one day, then be unredeemed the next day. It says we are forgiven of our sins, and once we are forgiven of our sins, then we are forgiven of all our sins, and we are always forgiven of all our sins.

Eph. 1:14. When we are saved, then we're sealed with the Holy Spirit.

- John 14:16. God doesn't give us the Holy Spirit one day and take Him away the next day. Once you have the Spirit, you always have the Spirit. Eph. 4:30, 1 Th. 5:19
- And the Holy Spirit is given as a pledge, a promise from God that He'll keep us going, He will keep us saved until the day of redemption, when we get our brand-new body.
- Here are a few other verses that make it clear that we can't lose our salvation:
1 Corinthians 1:8-9, 2 Timothy 4:18, John