

# Salvation is a Gift

Every person is guilty of sin, condemned by God, and needs to be saved. No one is worthy of salvation.

Romans 3:10-12 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

There is nothing we can do to earn salvation. God only accepts the perfect work of our Lord on the cross on our behalf. Even our best human efforts are rejected by God:

Isaiah 64:6 For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are as filthy rags.

The harder we work for salvation, the farther away it gets.

Romans 4:4-5 Now to one who works, his wage is not reckoned as grace, but as debt. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.

Good works are rejected by God as the means of gaining or maintaining salvation.

Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.

Romans 3:21-24 But now a righteousness from God, apart from the law has been made known, to which the Law and the prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ.

Salvation is received non-meritoriously by depending on Jesus Christ. It is not the strength or the endurance of our faith but the object of our faith, Jesus Christ, that receives all the credit.

We can do nothing to gain salvation, and we can do nothing to lose it. Those who do not believe this are being misled. The idea that Christ did His part on the cross and now we must do our part by maintaining a certain level of morality or goodness in order to get to heaven is not the truth of the Bible but a lie from Satan.

Just because salvation is free does not mean that it came without a price tag. The cost was tremendous! Jesus Christ paid for it in full by dying in our place on the cross. He was our substitute, taking the judgment for our sins on His own perfect body. That was His gift to us. A gift is free. It is either accepted or rejected, but it is never earned. If salvation could be earned, it would not be a gift. It would be payment that we deserve for something we did. Scripture makes it clear; salvation is a gift, no strings attached. God will not freely give a gift and then take it back. To do so would be completely out of character for Him.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are you saved through faith and that not of yourself, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.

"Grace" is receiving something we do not earn or deserve. Wouldn't you agree that it is foolish to work for something that is free? Anyone who trusts in his own works and ability is in effect saying that Christ's atonement was not good enough. He ignores what Christ said as he hung on the cross before he died: John 19:30 . . . it is finished! Salvation was completed, the gift was purchased, nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be taken from it. We either accept the gift by believing in Jesus Christ or reject it by trying to work for it.

Eternal life is a permanent gift. "Eternal" means infinite duration, everlasting, perpetual, endless, something impossible to lose. There is not one account in the entire Bible where anyone received the gift of eternal life and then lost it.

Those who believe they must work for salvation will stand before Jesus Christ at the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15). Their sins, which were already judged on the cross, will not be mentioned.

Since they rejected Christ's perfect work on the cross as the only way into heaven, they will have to rely on their own works to get in. They will find that only Christ's work is acceptable to God. Therefore, they will be cast into the Lake of Fire. Our salvation endures because its security depends on God, not on us. What a relief! What great new

I Peter 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Jude 24 Now unto Him [Jesus Christ] who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory [God the Father] with exceeding joy.

John 10:28 I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.

Romans 8:35 & 38-39 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or peril, or sword? For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come nor powers, 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.

There is no sin, no power and no person that can cause us to lose our salvation. Even if we change our mind and renounce Christ, we cannot lose our salvation. The gift of eternal life is permanent no matter how much our faith may waver.

I Timothy 2:11-12 if we endure [suffering] we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him; He also will deny us [rewards]; if we are faithless [turn away from Him], He remains; faithful [He does not take back the free gift] for He cannot deny Himself [His promise of eternal life still stands].

Our weakness does not diminish God's strength. Our failures do not revoke His promises.

If eternal life could be lost: Certain questions would need to be answered:

- How many sins would cause you to lose eternal life?
- Which sins would cause you to lose it?
- How many good deeds would it take to keep it?
- What type of good deeds must be done to keep it?
- Can it be regained once it is lost?
- How could it be regained?
- Can eternal life be lost and regained and then lost again?
- What examples does the Bible give of those who lost it?
- What examples does the Bible give of those who regained it?
- How can a person know if he has lost it?
- How can a person know if he has regained it?

You can read the Bible cover to cover and not find answers to these questions. Why? Because they are irrelevant and require no answers since eternal life cannot be lost. The apostle John did a great job of summing things up:

I John 5:10-12 The one who believes in the Son of God has the witness [truth of the gospel] in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has made concerning His Son and the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son [has believed in Jesus Christ] has [eternal] life; he who does not have the Son of God [does not believe in Jesus Christ] does not have [eternal] life.

Hebrews 6:4-6 For it is impossible to renew to repentance those who have fallen away since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. Is this saying that a person can lose eternal life and that once he has, it is impossible to get it back? Absolutely not! This was written to Jews who had believed in Jesus Christ but continued to sacrifice animals even after Christ was sacrificed on the cross. It was hard for them to stop observing a ritual that their ancestors had observed for over a thousand years. So the writer of Hebrews reminded them in Hebrews 10:12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God.

These Jewish believers had fallen away from the fundamentals of the Christian faith that they had been taught. Every time they sacrificed an animal they were again crucifying the Son of God and putting Him up to an open shame, as if His sacrifice was not sufficient. As long as they continued to do this, it was impossible to renew them to “repentance”, which means to “change their mind” to line up with correct fundamental doctrines.

Philippians 2:12-13 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling. This was written to believers who already possessed eternal life. The word “salvation” causes confusion because most people automatically equate it with eternal life. But this is never its meaning in the entire book of Philippians. It is used to convey the idea of being physically delivered from something.

Some believers are winners and some are losers. The winners are obedient to the commands of God such as growing up spiritually by studying the Word (II Tim. 2:15), confessing sins (I John 1:9), unconditionally loving others (John 13:34), and doing good works (Eph.2:10), just to name a few. They will receive rewards, decorations, special blessings and privileges that will last for all eternity. Loser believers waste their time on earth by being disobedient and indifferent to God and His Word. They have bought Satan’s lie that happiness and contentment can be found in money, sex, power, friends, a big house, a different spouse, a fun time, etc. Consequently, they never grow up spiritually and they lose out on the great things that winner believers receive.

“Working out your salvation” is a call to be a winner believer. It is a plea to be delivered from the miserable life and losses of the loser believer. Fear and trembling are mentioned in this verse to warn believers that losing eternal rewards is no trivial matter.



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