

Once Saved, Always Saved?

by William ... and Eddie

“Are you saved?” Some believe all you have to say is “I have accepted Jesus Christ.” But is that all there is? **The Bible reveals more is necessary!**

The Bible does mention several times that salvation requires belief in Jesus Christ being the Son of the living God. **John 3:16** states, “*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*”

Though many of mainstream Christianity’s preachers and leaders are cautious in actually using the phrase “once saved, always saved,” their teaching generally supports the concept. In fact, it is this same thinking—in conjunction with the concept of grace working separate from God’s law—that allows them to ignore keeping **God’s commandments**.

What are we saved from?

This may seem like a basic question, but it is important. **We are saved from eternal death**. Death is what we earn when we sin. “*For the wages of sin is death*” (**Romans 6:23**). - “Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and **sin is lawlessness**” (**1 John 3:4**). So sin is the breaking of God’s law. It is only by the blood of Christ shed for us that we can have our sins forgiven. John wrote, “*And the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin*” (**1 John 1:7**). *We are forgiven our sins by the blood of Christ, the perfect sacrifice.*

That leads us to the next question. → **What is our part of salvation, according to the Bible?**

The apostle Paul tells us in **Philippians 2:12**, “*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.*” We are told to “**work out**” our own salvation. This shows we have an essential part to play in our salvation.- Many who say they believe in Christ seem to not put all the pieces of salvation together. Instead, they try to make an entire puzzle by stretching one piece (**belief in Jesus Christ**) as thinly as they can. The Bible mentions several other components that often appear to be ignored. - We see these components in **Acts 2:38**: “*Then Peter said to them, ‘**Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**’*”

Repentance: This includes the understanding that we have sinned and gone contrary to God’s way. We have to actively **move away from sin** and become closer to God’s righteousness. God does not continue to accept us just as we were when we first believed. He commands that we change to **fit His standards**, not standards we make up for ourselves. Repentance is a fix event but also an ongoing process (**1 John 1:8-9**).

Baptism: This is the symbol of a repentant, sinful person dying and a changed, new person **emerging from a watery grave**. Many mainstream Christian movies depict people being “saved” by fiery preaching and a tearful belief in Christ. Where are the baptisms in this process? Christ Himself asked to be baptized, so why would those who are being “saved” not seek the same required symbol?

Receiving the Holy Spirit : after baptism gives us the guarantee, or down payment, on salvation. It is God's power inside of us that we must stir up to help us fight off carnality and embrace spirituality.

This conversion process is essential to salvation. Notice again **Acts 2:38**: “**Repent, and** let every one of you **be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; **and** you shall **receive** the gift of the **Holy Spirit**” (emphasis added). Why did Peter tell the crowd to do these things if all they needed to do was believe in Christ?

The down payment

Notice **Ephesians 1:13-14**: “*In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, [which] is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*” Here the Holy Spirit is called a guarantee, or down payment, on salvation. Imagine a home buyer who follows the concept of “once saved, always saved.” He would incorrectly decide that the down payment was enough.

Thankfully, God not only pays the down payment, He pays the whole price. He not only gives a down payment of the Spirit, but He will give more of the Spirit daily. He only asks, by analogy, that we not vandalize the home and that we take care of it. Just simply believing in Christ is not enough.

Conversion is a major event and a lifelong commitment.

We compared the process of conversion to buying a home. Nothing we could do would ever pay for it. But, by God's grace, we can receive this gift freely. Still, receiving this gift requires that we show that we really want it by continually drawing closer to God and removing sin. It requires seeking not to disgust the Great Giver with our evil actions, but seeking to please Him by obeying His rules, which are really for our own benefit. God wants us to follow His instructions to us with a deep love for Him from our heart. **Loving God entails keeping His commandments.** **John 14:15** states, “*If you love Me, keep My commandments.*”

We will receive the promises, if we have endured to the end. Christ tells us in **Matthew 10:22**, “*And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.*” **We must endure to the end.** That is not the same as just believing on the name of Christ and then doing whatever we want. We are to become a new individual and walk in the ways of the Lord.

Choose God's way of life

The Bible does not teach “once saved, always saved.” It teaches **we can lose out on salvation**. As God tells us in **Hebrews 10:26**, “*For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.*” If there is no sacrifice for sin, then we will not be saved. - Even the apostle Paul realized he could lose out on salvation if he neglected to do what God wanted. “*But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified*” (**1 Corinthians 9:27**). - If “belief” in Christ were all one needed in order to be saved, the Bible would only contain about half of what Christ and the apostles taught, since the rest would not be necessary. However, since we have the entire Bible, Christ tells us in **Matthew 4:4**, “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*”

All the concepts regarding true, **repentance, baptism and the Holy Spirit** are **highly important for one's salvation**. Christ and the apostles taught these concepts for a reason—so that we may be saved.