

Can I Regain Salvation Once It Is Lost?

Some time ago David Martin, minister at the Solid Rock Baptist Church in Bartlett, TN, authored an article entitled "Common Sense Questions A 'Church Of Christ' Preacher Cannot Clearly Answer." This article contains 13 questions that address subjects such as the necessity of baptism and instrumental music. Through much study and reading on these subjects I have formulated answers that cite "book, chapter, and verse" references showing what the Bible teaches regarding these questions. This article addresses Mr. Martin's sixth question.

It is my prayer that anyone who reads this article will study the verses cited with an open mind to truly learn what God's Word teaches. Obedience to God's Word, nothing more and nothing less, is what will get us to Heaven. We all want to go, but we have to remember that those who reach Heaven will do so on God's terms, not man's.

QUESTION

If as a Christian I can fall and "lose my salvation," is it possible to regain it? If so, how? If God "takes away" my salvation, doesn't that make Him an "Indian giver"? How could I ever know for sure that I was saved or lost?

BOOK CHAPTER AND VERSE ANSWER

We have looked extensively at scripture that shows it is possible for one to lose his or her salvation. There is no "if". We will address the regaining of salvation a little later. First let's look at the question "If God 'takes away' my salvation, doesn't that make him an 'Indian giver'?" Specifically Let's focus on "If God takes away my salvation." Does God take our salvation? No, when we return to a life of sin we forfeit our salvation. We give up our access to the blood of Christ. Hebrews 10:26 teaches this.

Heb 10:26

(26) For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

Let's say for example, you went to a used car lot and found a car that you wanted. The car is there available for anyone who wants to purchase it. You then agreed with the owner to purchase the car if he would finance it. The terms of the deal are that the car lot owner will give you a car to keep as long as you meet his conditions. His conditions are that you make a minimum monthly payment until the debt is paid. He may, at his discretion, extend grace to you if you are doing your best but fail to meet every obligation under the terms of your agreement. But if you quit trying to meet these obligations, the car will be repossessed. Did the owner of the car lot "take" your car? Is he an "Indian giver"? No, you forfeited your right to keep the car by not meeting the conditions

of the purchase agreement. Although it may be a crude example, that is similar to our salvation.

God has made salvation available to all who will accept and continue to abide by the terms. Once you accept the grace of God, obey the Gospel, and begin to live for Him, you have accepted the terms of salvation. Salvation is yours as long as you continue to live according to the conditions. That is what Heb 10:26 and I John 1:7 mean.

1Jo 1:7

(7) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Once one has forfeited his salvation, can he get it back? Yes, he can. The account of Simon, the sorcerer, in Acts 8 shows how a person can be caught up in sin yet repent and be forgiven. Unlike the used car dealer, God doesn't hold our history against us when we truly repent.

1Jo 1:9

(9) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Another passage that shows it is possible to return to God and be forgiven is Romans 11:22-23. Here Paul is writing about the Jews turning from God and God making salvation available to the Gentiles. Notice in verse 23 he says that those Jews could return.

Rom 11:22-23

(22) Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

(23) And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again.

Now, to answer the last question, "How could I ever know for sure that I was saved or lost?" It is possible to know, but it takes self-examination and honesty in evaluating the results. Let's begin by looking at three passages of scripture.

1Jo 5:13

(13) These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

2Pe 1:10

(10) Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

2Ti 1:12

(12) For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

From these two verses we can see that we can know and be sure that if we follow Christ and continue to follow Him, we will be in a saved condition, or have eternal life. The word if let's us know that salvation is not unconditional or predetermined, but **IF** we do these things we will not fall. We also see that we should have confidence in our salvation. How can we be confident that we are saved? The same way that Paul was.

2Ti 4:7

(7) I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith:

When we are living our life in such a way that after we reflect on our lives we can honestly say that up to this point we have fought a good fight and we have kept the faith, then we can be sure we are in a saved condition. If we can't make those statements, then we probably aren't doing the best we can to follow Christ.