

Can A Christian Lose His Eternal Life?

☞ Other Expressions You May Hear ☞

- ❖ *perseverance of the saints*
- ❖ *preservation of the saints*
- ❖ *eternal security*
- ❖ *once saved, always saved*



What the Doctrine Means

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*They, whom God hath accepted in His beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly **persevere therein to the end**, and be eternally saved.*

Westminster Confession of Faith

possibility of falling away in this life and failing to endure on into eternal life
Arminianism

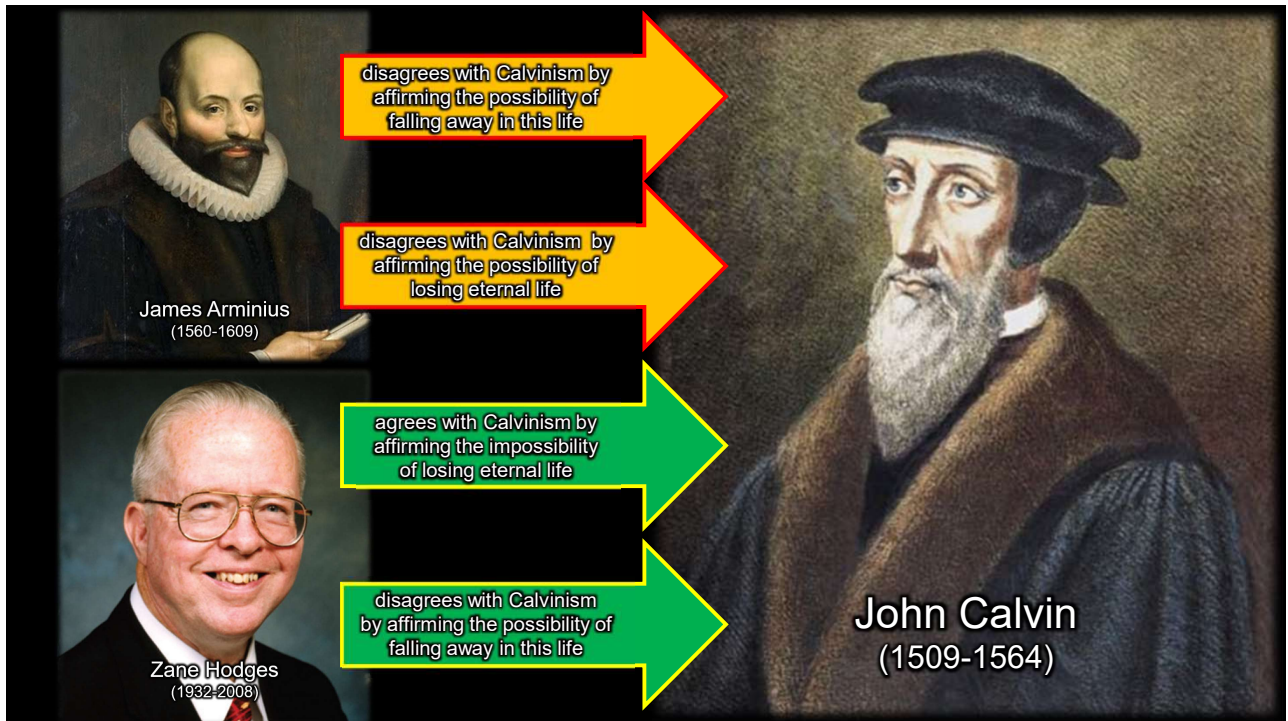
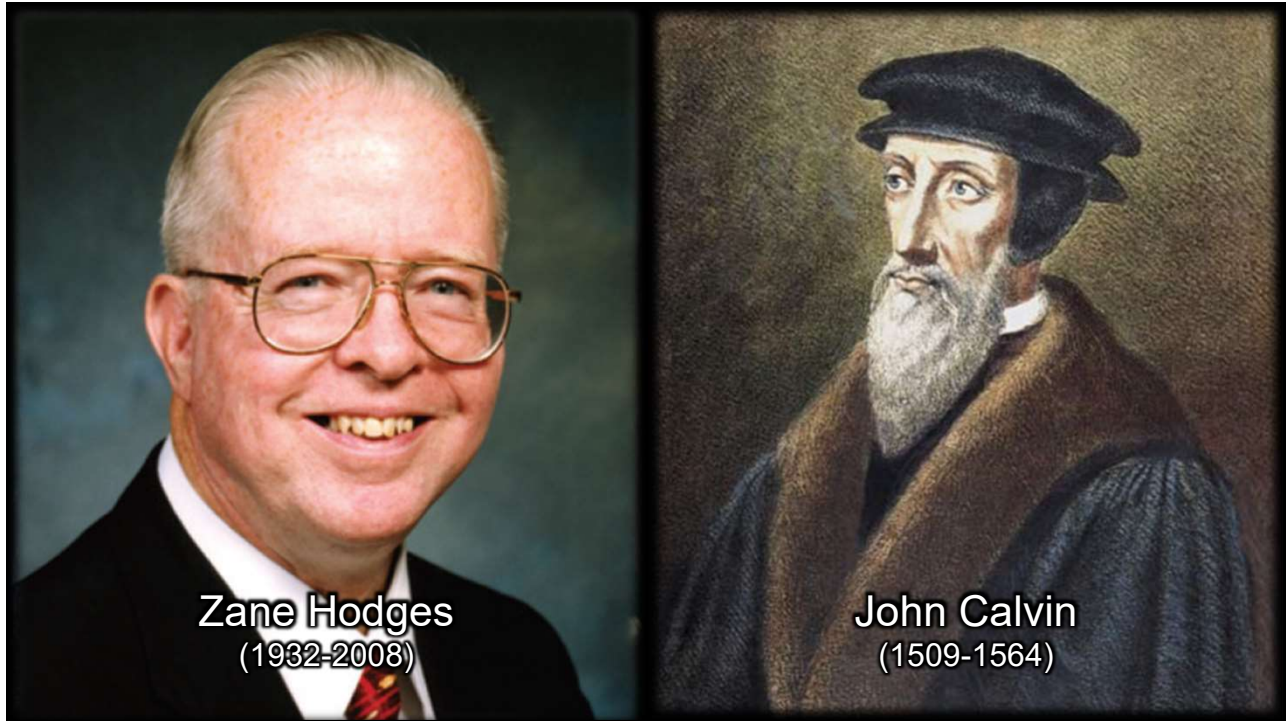
enduring on into eternal life even with the possibility of falling away in this life
Free Grace

enduring on into eternal life without the possibility of falling away in this life
Calvinism
Lordship Salvation

Note that contemporary Arminianism holds that one can lose his eternal life though Arminius himself and the Remonstrants were uncertain whether this was possible.

persevere therein to the end



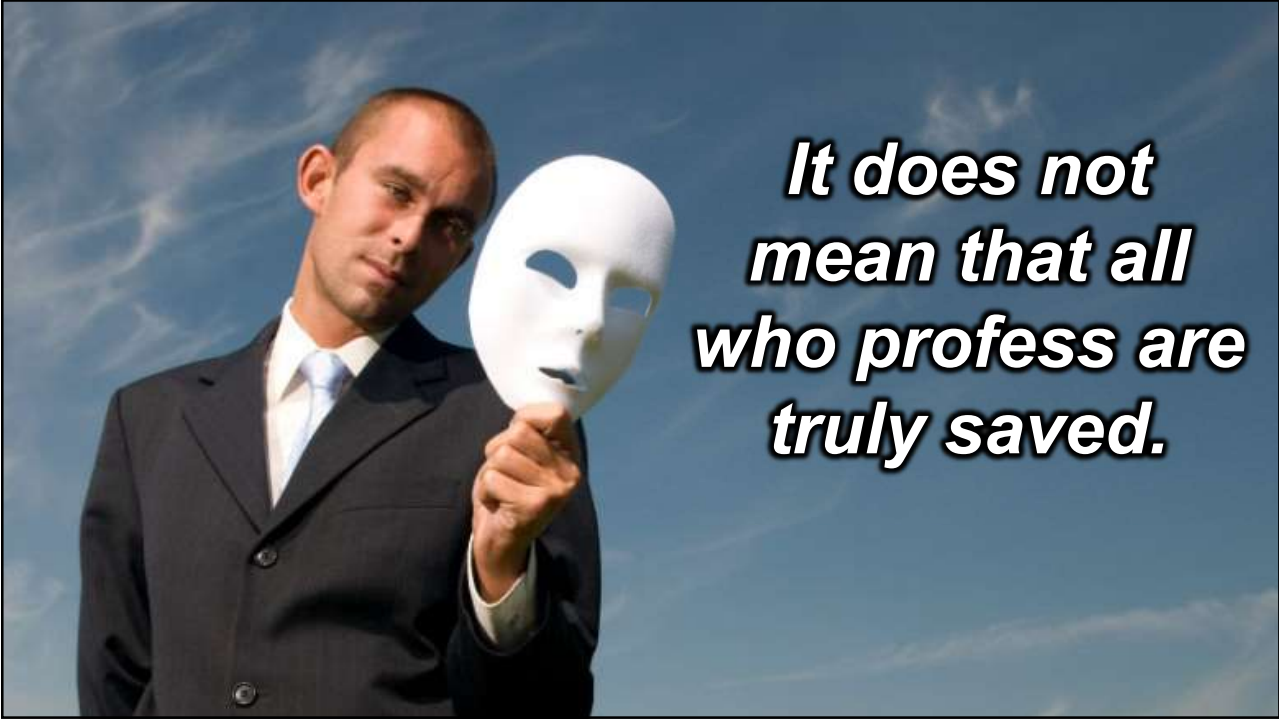


*There are important difference
between the doctrine I will be
defending here and the Calvinist
(Reformed) doctrine of
perseverance of the saints.*

*The Reformed doctrine denies that
the Christian can lose eternal life.
But it goes further and maintains
that a Christian can fall away only
to a certain limit in this life.*

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sun is a bright, glowing orb in the center of the frame, partially obscured by the text. The sky is a gradient of orange and red, and the water below is dark and calm. The foreground shows the dark silhouettes of trees and bushes.

What the Doctrine Does Not Mean

A photograph of a man in a dark suit and light blue tie, holding a white, featureless mask in his right hand. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a clear blue sky with some light clouds.

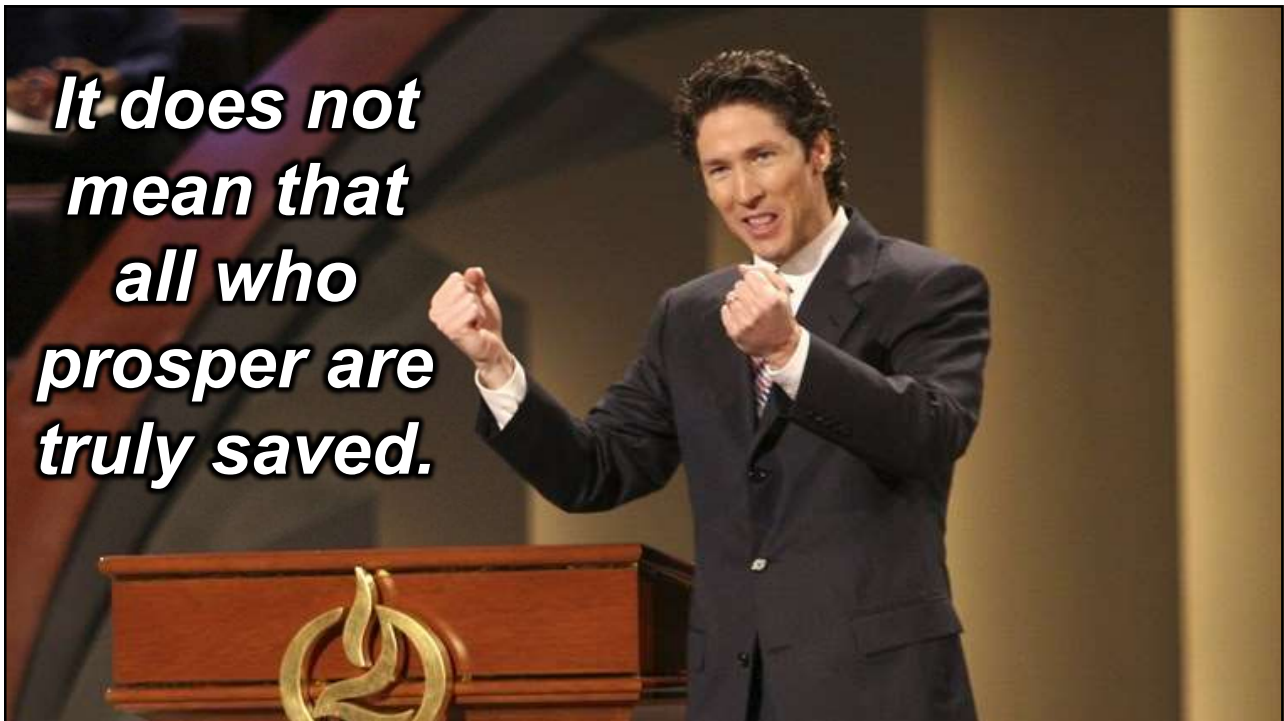
*It does not
mean that all
who profess are
truly saved.*

☞ Matthew 7:21-23 ☞

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. {22} Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' {23} And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"



***It does not
mean that
all who
prosper are
truly saved.***



☞ Psalm 37:7-9 ☜

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. {8} Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it only causes harm. {9} For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth.



☞ Psalm 73:3-5 ☜

For I was envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked. {4} For there are no pangs in their death, But their strength is firm. {5} They are not in trouble as other men, Nor are they plagued like other men.



✧ Jeremiah 12:1-2 ✧

Righteous are You, O LORD, when I plead with You; yet let me talk with You about Your judgments. Why does the way of the wicked prosper? Why are those happy who deal so treacherously? {2} You have planted them, yes, they have taken root; they grow, yes, they bear fruit. You are near in their mouth But far from their mind.



It does not mean that those who are truly saved can in no sense fail.



☞ Luke 22:31-32 ☞

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, **that your faith should not fail**; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."



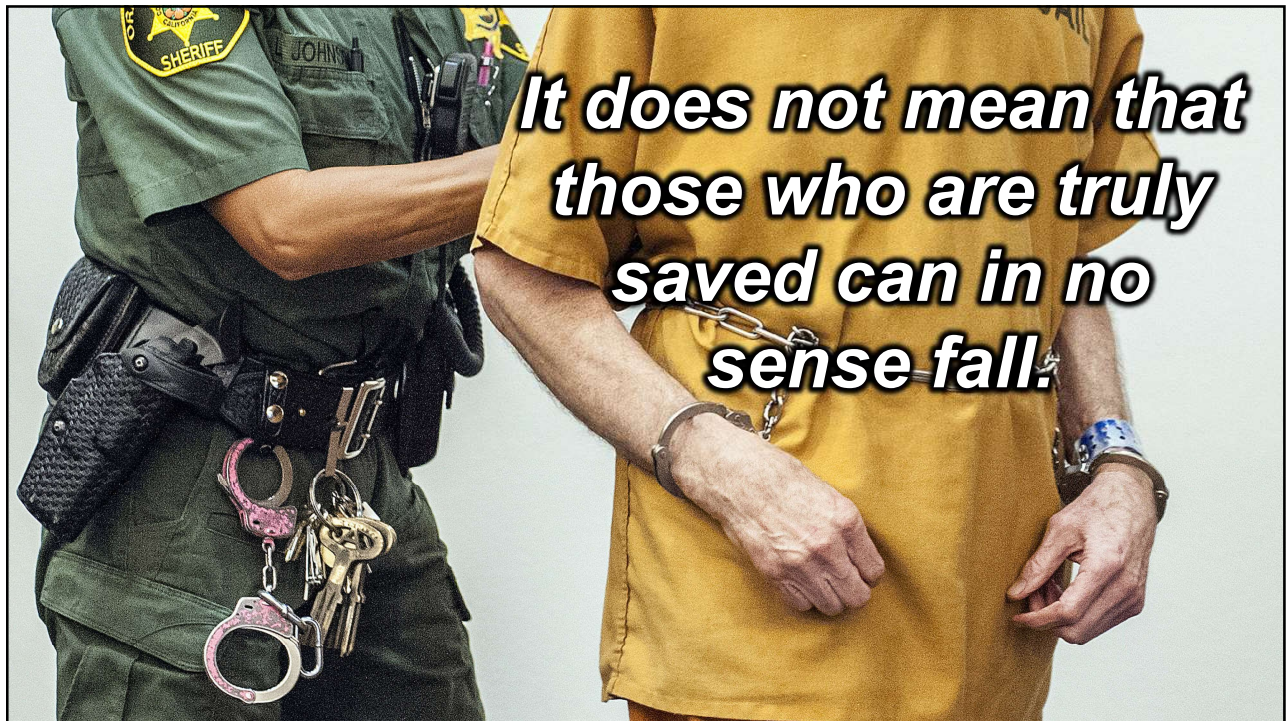
☞ Hebrews 11:32-40 ☞

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: {33} who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, {34} quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. {35} Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.



☞ Hebrews 11:32-40 ☞

{36} Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. {37} They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented—{38} of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. {39} And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, {40} God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.



☞ Psalm 37:23-24 ☞

The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, And He delights in his way. {24} Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; For the LORD upholds him with His hand.



☞ 2 Peter 3:17-18 ☞

You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; {2} but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.



☞ 1 Timothy 1:18-20 ☜

*This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, {19} having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, {20} of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom **I delivered to Satan** that they may learn not to blaspheme.*



☞ Matthew 18:15-17 ☜

*"Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. {16} "But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' {17} "And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, **let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.***



☞ 1 Corinthians 5:9-10 ☞

I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. {10} Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. {11} But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; not even to eat with such a person. {12} For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? {13} But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."



☞ 2 Corinthians 4:4 ☞

whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe



☞ 1 John 5:19 ☞

We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.



☞ 2 Timothy 2:17-18 ☞

*And their message will spread like cancer.
Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort,
{18} who have strayed concerning the truth,
saying that the resurrection is already past;
and they overthrow the faith of some.*





The Case for Eternal Security



∞ PERISH ∞

*It is not God's will
that we perish.*

☞ *Matthew 18:12-14* ☞

"What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? {13} And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. {14} Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."



☞ *John 6:37-39* ☞

"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. {38} For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. {39} This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day."



∞ PRAYER ∞

Jesus prayed for us.

∞ John 17:15, 20 ∞

"I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. ... {20} I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;"



∞ POWER ∞

God is powerful: Nothing can separate us (from without).

∞ John 10:28-29 ∞

"And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. {29} My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand."



☞ Romans 8:35-39 ☜

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? {36} As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." {37} Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. {38} For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, {39} 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.



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☞ PRESERVATION ☞

God preserves us from ultimately falling (from within).

☞ 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 ☞

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. {24} He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.



☞ 2 Timothy 1:12 ☞

For this reason 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 what I have committed to Him until that Day.



∞ PRESENT TENSE ∞

*Eternal life is
present tense.*

∞ John 3:36 ∞

*"He who believes in the Son has everlasting
life; and he who does not believe the Son
shall not see life, but the wrath of God
abides on him."*



☞ John 5:24 ☞

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life."



☞ John 6:47 ☞

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life."



☞ 1 John 5:11-13 ☞

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. {12} He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. {13} These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.



☞ PREDESTINATION ☞

We're predestined to adoption and conformation.

☞ Ephesians 1:5 ☞

having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,



☞ Romans 8:23 ☞

Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.



✧ Romans 8:29 ✧

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.



✧ 1 John 3:2 ✧

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.



∞ PROTECTION ∞

We're sealed by the Spirit.

∞ Ephesians 1:13 ∞

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,



☞ Ephesians 4:30 ☞

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.



☞ PROMISE ☞

The Spirit is an earnest or guarantee.

☞ Ephesians 1:14 ☞

*who is the guarantee of our inheritance until
the redemption of the purchased
possession, to the praise of His glory.*



☞ 2 Corinthians 1:22 ☞

*who also has sealed us and given us the
Spirit in our hearts as a deposit.*



☞ 2 Corinthians 5:1-5 ☞

For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. {2} For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, {3} if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. {4} For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. {5} Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee



☞ PERFECT ☞

Christ's work is perfect.

☞ Hebrews 7:25 ☞

Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He ever lives to make intercession for them.



☞ Hebrews 9:12 ☞

Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

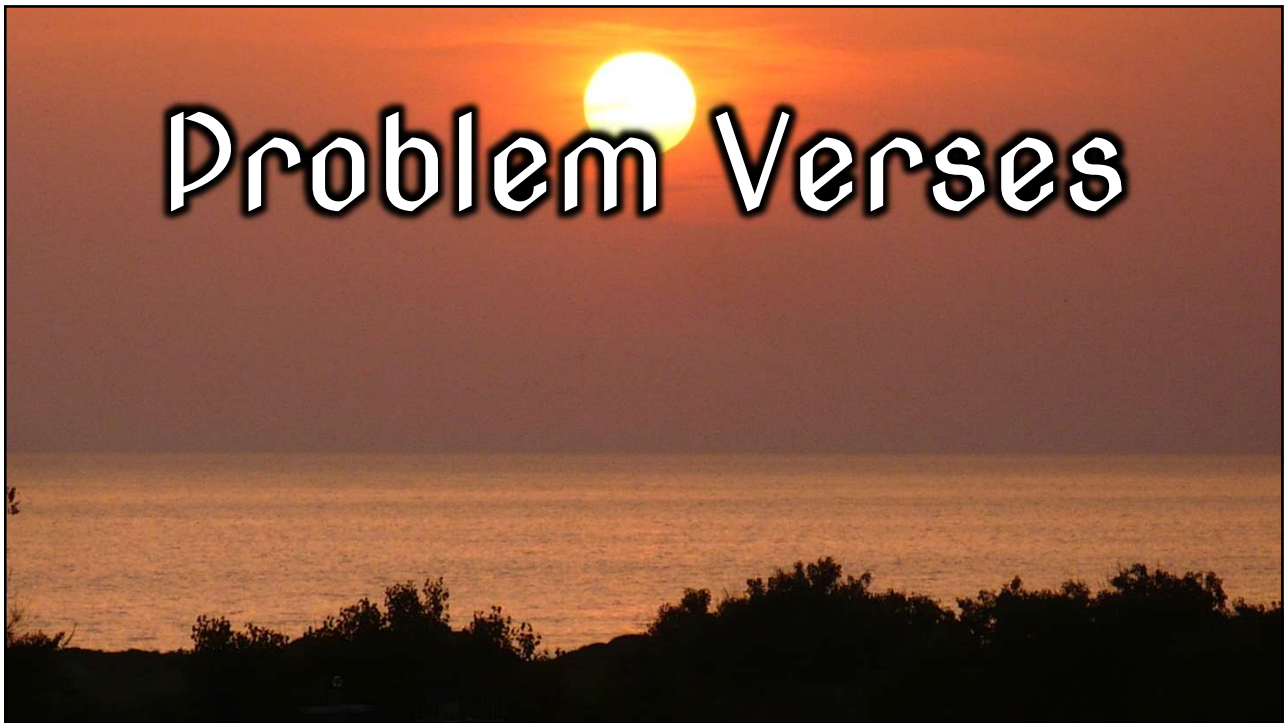


☞ Hebrews 10:14 ☞

For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.



Problem Verses



Dealing with "Problem" Verses in General on any Topic

1. Interpret obscure passages in light of clear.
2. Interpret minority passages in light of majority.
3. Interpret earlier revelation in light of later revelation.

Dealing with "Problem" Verses in General on Eternal Security

1. Is the passage referring to one who has lost his salvation or to one who was never saved in the first place?
2. The word 'saved' does not always necessarily refer to going to heaven when one dies, but may refer to temporal deliverance. (Matt. 8:24-25)

☞ Matthew 8:24-25 ☞

And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. {25} Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!"

3. The word 'judgment' does not necessarily refer to going to hell when one dies, but may refer to temporal judgment. (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 11:28-30; James 3:1; 1 Peter 4:17)

☞ Romans 14:10 ☞

But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.



☞ 2 Corinthians 5:10 ☞

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.



☞ 1 Corinthians 11:28-30 ☞

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. {29} For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. {30} For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.



☞ James 3:1 ☞

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.



✧ 1 Peter 4:17 ✧

For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?



3. The word 'judgment' does not necessarily refer to going to hell when one dies, but may refer to temporal judgment.
4. Some of the "problem" verses prove too much even for the one who thinks a Christian can lose his salvation. (Heb. 6:4, 6)

☞ Hebrews 6:4, 6 ☞

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, ... {6} if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance,



5. What does the Bible say happens to a Christian when he sins? (Heb. 12:7-11. 1 Cor. 11:27-31)

☞ Hebrews 12:7-11 ☞

If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? {8} But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. {9}

Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? {10} For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. {11} Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.



☞ 1 Corinthians 11:27-31 ☞

Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. {28}

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. {29} For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. {30} For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. {31} For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.



"Problem" Verses

☞ Hebrews 6:4-8 ☞

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, {5} and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, {6} if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. {7} For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; {8} but if it bears thorns and briars, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

☞ Galatians 5:4 ☞

You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.



☞ Hebrews 10:26-30 ☞

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, {27} but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. {28} Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. {29} Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? {30} For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, says the Lord." And again, "The LORD will judge His people."



✧ Matthew 24:13 ✧

"But he who endures to the end shall be saved."



✧ Matthew 12:31-32 ✧

"Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. "Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."



✧ Corinthians 9:27 ✧

But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.



✧ Revelation 3:5 ✧

"He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.



☞ Revelation 22:19 ☞

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, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.



"Problem" Questions

1. Does the doctrine of once saved always saved mean that it does not matter how much someone sins after they have trusted Christ?
2. If we are "free" to chose Christ, why are we not "free" having chosen Christ, to reject Him?