

# Salvation is by Remaining Faithful

## Once saved is not always saved

Charles Dailey 1995

The teaching of eternal security is a part of Calvinism, but there are those that hold the teaching that are not Calvinists. The teaching holds that salvation is an *event* rather than a *process*.

While the teaching of "once saved always saved" is seldom spelled out in clear terms today, yet it is widely believed. It is true: there is an *initial phase* to salvation.<sup>1</sup> We can say clearly that we **are** saved people. We need not be in doubt.

There is an *ongoing process* to salvation. We are "working out our salvation"<sup>2</sup> as we are going about life. We are not earning it, just growing in it. There is also a *final phase* where we **will** be saved.<sup>3</sup> In this way, salvation can be spoken of correctly as *past, present, and future*.

In conversation, we hear someone say of one who is not living a holy life, "I'm so glad he was saved three years ago." (Salvation was initialized but not maintained.) The implication is that no matter how he is living today, he is saved because of a past decision. This is the doctrine of eternal security.

Among Restoration churches the words are different, but the doctrine is the same. "He was baptized at camp when he was 15." The implication is that he cannot be lost now because he was saved then. This, too, is the doctrine of eternal security.

Eternal security is implied by those who **were** active in the church but **now** have exchanged active duty for traveling, pursuing hobbies or sports.

Advocates of eternal security cite John 3:16 as evidence that all that is required is faith. "He that believes." The passage is seen as more than a single event when we look at it in the King James Version: "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" (KJV) The "*eth*" ending on "*believeth*" shows continuing faith is required.

Consider the following weight of Scripture:

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 2:42; 11:14

<sup>2</sup> Philippians 2:12

<sup>3</sup> Philippians 1:28

<b>Salvation is Conditional</b>	
<b>Event</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The story of the king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. Matthew 18:21-35.	Forgiveness was <i>retracted</i> by the king because the forgiven man did not forgive the person owing him. Verse 35: "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart." (NIV)
The story of the 10 virgins. Matthew 25:1-13.	Five virgins missed the wedding feast. Jesus admonished his disciples to be watchful in verse 13. Why watch if the feast cannot be missed anyway?
The parable of the seed that fell among the rocks. Luke 8:13.	Luke 8:13 "Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away." (NIV)
The parable of the faithful and wise manager. Luke 12:42-46	Luke 12:46 ". . . He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers." (NIV) A believer was assigned a place with unbelievers.
The metaphor of the True Vine in John 15:1-6.	John 15:6 "If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned." (NIV) The detached branch is destroyed. Detachment is possible.
The disciples were encouraged to remain true. Acts 14:21-22.	Entry into the kingdom was not automatic after initially believing.
The brothers were warned to live by the Spirit. Romans 8:12-14.	Living by the flesh meant death. If life here is <i>eternal life</i> , then what is death but <i>eternal death</i> ?
Gentiles stand before God by faith. Romans 11:20-22.	Failure to maintain that faith will cause Gentiles to be "cut off." An active, ongoing, faith is required to be saved.
Paul urged the Corinthian brethren to run in order to get the prize of the crown of life. 1 Corinthians 9:23 - 27.	Even Paul could be disqualified for the prize. verse 27.
God's people traveling from Egypt to the Promised Land were a model for us. 1 Corinthians 10: 1 - 21.	Many of God's people that had been saved from Egypt did not make the Promised Land because of disobedience. The application is clear. We run the same risk. Verse 6.
Paul warned the Corinthian church it was necessary to hold fast.	1 Cor 15:1-2 "Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain." (NIV)
Continuing in Christian living requires constant participation.	2 Cor 1:24 "Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, because it is by faith you stand firm." (NIV)
Paul urged the Corinthians to examine themselves. This implies it is possible to miss the reward.	2 Cor 13:5 "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you-- unless, of course, you fail the test?" (NIV)
Some of the Galatians were away from grace and out of the faith.	Gal 5:4-5 "You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. 5 But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope." (NIV)

<b>Salvation is Conditional</b>	
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The Galatians are warned about sowing to their sinful nature.	Gal 6:8-9 "The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. 9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."(NIV)
The Philippians were told the faith was a continuing process.	Phil 2:12 "Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed-- not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence-- continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling," (NIV)
Paul described himself as aggressive in the faith with salvation as an outcome.	Phil 3:12-14 "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." (NIV)

The evidence could be multiplied.<sup>4</sup> Just one clear passage should be enough and so if just one of these passages teaches conditional salvation, then God has spoken. For a person to reject this weight of evidence shows they have an agenda other than God's Word.

