

EVANGELICAL BIBLE COLLEGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



**THE SECURITY
OF
SALVATION**

by

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The Security of Salvation.

Does the Bible present a whole (unconditional and permanent) salvation, or does it offer a conditional and temporary salvation?

A. The problems of eternal security.

Dr. John F. Walvoord writes:

"While most believers in Christ accept the doctrine that they can have assurance of salvation at any given moment in their experience, the question is often raised, "Can a person once saved become lost again?"

Since the fear of losing salvation could seriously affect a believer's peace of mind, and because his future is so vital, this question is a most important aspect of the doctrine of salvation.

The claim that one who is once saved may be lost again is based on certain Biblical passages which seem to raise questions concerning the continuance of salvation.

In the history of the church, there have been opposing systems of interpretation known as Calvinism, in support of eternal security, and Arminianism, in opposition to eternal security (each named after its foremost apologist, John Calvin or Jacob Arminius)."
(Major Bible Themes, p. 220)

Those holding the Arminian position confidently assure us that their view is amply supported by some 100 Biblical passages.

It will prove helpful to all at this point to examine the more important of these verses.

They can be arranged under the following topical headings:

1. These passages deal with false teachers:

Matthew 7:15-23; 24:11, 24; 2nd Corinthians 11:13-15; 1st Timothy 4:1; 2nd Peter 2:1-22; 3:16, 17; 1st John 2:19; 2nd John 1:7; Jude 1:4, 10-16; Revelation 22:18, 19.

The men described in the above verses are apostates.

An apostate is one who has received light but not eternal life.

He knows something of the Word of God, but nothing about the God of the Word.

He then refuses to give even mental assent to the great truths of the Bible.

His description and deeds are as follows:-

a) He is a grievous and ravening wolf dressed in sheep's clothing. (Mt. 7:15; Acts 20:29).

b) He hates real sheep. (Acts 20:29).

c) He will deceive many through great signs and wonders. (Mt. 24:11, 24).

d) He is a perverse empire-builder. (Acts 20:30).

e) He is divisive and materialistic. (Rom. 16:17, 18).

f) He gives impressive speeches, using flowery language. (Rom. 16:18).

g) He deceives by allowing Satan to disguise him as an angel of light, rather than a demon of darkness. (2nd Cor. 11:13, 15).

h) His nature and message are demon-controlled. (1st Tim. 4:1-3).

- i) He perverts the doctrine of the Son of God. (2nd Pet. 2:1; 2nd John 1:7; Jude 4).
- j) He perverts the doctrine of the Word of God. (2nd Pet. 3:16; Rev. 22:18, 19).
- k) He perverts the doctrine of the grace of God. (Jude 4).
- l) He can be (eventually) identified by his fruits. (Mt. 7:16-20; James 3:11, 12; 1st John 2:19).

Remarks:

Perhaps one of the favourite passages of Scripture that the Arminians raise in an effort to show that a believer can lose his or her salvation is found in Hebrews 6:4-6:-

V4: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,

V5: and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

V6: if they fall away, (or have fallen away) to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame."

This solemn warning marks one of the great theological battlefields of Scripture.

Here the clashing proponents of Calvinism and Arminianism have wheeled and charged, unleashing thunderous volleys of acrimony against one another, only to generate much heat and little profit.

The Calvinists, ever mindful of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints which is eternal security, seize upon the words:-

"For it is impossible . . . if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance."

"These cannot," they say, "be truly regenerated Christians, no matter how strongly the descriptive phrases of verses 4-5 seem to

imply they are, for otherwise they would not fall away into irremediable apostasy."

On the other hand, the Arminians focus on these descriptive phrases and say:-

"It is impossible to portray true Christians any more powerfully and accurately than is done here; therefore, since they are said to fall away it is clear that regeneration can be lost after it has been obtained."

A third group of intrepid interpreters insist that the question of eternal salvation is not in question here at all, since it is only a matter of urging new Christians on to further understanding of their fellowship with Christ.

They say with some conviction that the writer is simply describing a "hypothetical case" to prove his point that a TRUE believer cannot lose his salvation.

The writer's statement in Hebrews 6:9 seems to support this third interpretation:-

"But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner."

This third interpretation runs something like this:-

"Let's suppose that you do not go on to maturity in the faith. Does that mean that you will go back to condemnation, that you will lose your salvation.??....IMPOSSIBLE!!"

If you could lose your salvation, it would be impossible to get it back again; and this would disgrace Jesus Christ!! He would have to be crucified all over again for you, and this could never happen!!"

As in the case of many clashes over Scripture, there is truth in different views.

We are helped here by viewing the readers not as a homogenous group who must all be classified in one category or another.....,

.....**Rather**, they are a **mixed** assembly, among whom were **many** genuine believers needing a degree of **prodding** to go on in their experience of truth.

There were also some who professed faith in Christ but who gave **no evidence** in their behaviour or attitudes that they were truly **born again** from on high.

This is the case in many churches today and has been so in every generation of believers from the first century onwards.

No matter what careful measures are employed to make sure that all church members are born again, it is almost certain that there is **no** congregation which is not just such a **mixed** multitude as the writer of Hebrews addresses.

The ratio of **true** believers to **apparent** believers may vary widely, but since we cannot distinguish these by observation (or even careful testing), we must view these warnings as applying to us all.

The thought that the possibility even exists that one could **lose** their salvation and **not** be able to repent and be reinstated into the faith is a devastating consideration.

My view and position on this vital matter will soon become quite clear.

But instead of looking at what these groups believe and commenting on that, I prefer to let our **text** speak for itself.

Because, with a proper exposition we will see the beauty of a passage like this as it accomplishes what the Holy Spirit intended in speaking to the hearts of both **believers** and **unbelievers** alike.!!

One of the **first** rules of Bible study is to take any particular verse or verses and study them in connection to the **context** in which they're found.....

And if there still seems to be confusion, allow God to explain Himself in other portions He's given us which relate to the **same** subject.

A common rule is that we allow the less clear verse to be explained by the more clear.

And the more clear verse may not necessarily be found in the context.....

.....It may be found somewhere else in the Word of God.

Keep in mind that the Bible is one book made up of a number of parts. And yet, it is all the mind and will of God and so we shouldn't neglect any part of it when searching for God's truth.

And so the question you may have is:-

"well, what is the truth concerning my salvation and my eternal security or lack thereof.?"

And the answer to this question will make a great difference in the way you live your life for God.

The group who believes that you can lose your salvation would accuse the other group that the mind-set of eternal security will only foster a lax attitude and allow all sorts of sin to enter the picture.

After all, they say, if we can't lose our salvation then it doesn't make any difference how we live.

And then the group who believes in eternal security would criticize those who believe in the possibility of losing one's salvation of contributing to unnecessary fear, of striving in the flesh to make sure you don't do anything to jeopardize your salvation.

They would say such a belief system ultimately puts your salvation in your own hands.

But again, the issue before us this morning is what does our text say and what does it mean.?

Can one be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, truly regenerate, a true believer and follower of Jesus Christ, and then completely reject Him and FORFEIT salvation?

And if one can be saved and then unsaved, is there no hope for his returning to Christ again?

Before we consider these questions, it's important to note that they are not central to the writer's point.

He wants the readers to stop being lazy, to stop slurping up and dispensing milk, to start eating meat, and leave behind elementary teachings.

He wants all this done so that people will mature spiritually.

So, what do these verses have to do with that?

They obviously have something to do with it, because they begin with the word "FOR."

Specifically, they are related to the writer's admonition in verse 1 to not lay "AGAIN" an elementary foundation that begins with teaching about "repentance"

This becomes clear as we look at Hebrews 6:6, in which the writer, using similar wording, says that it is impossible to renew some people "AGAIN" to "repentance."

It's also important to note the shift in pronouns in these verses.

Up until this point, the writer has been using the first-person plural "WE" and "US" and the second-person plural "YOU."

He has been addressing his readers as "YOU," and it's possible that sometimes they are included in his use of "WE."

In Hebrews 6:4-8, he uses third-person plural pronouns such as "THOSE," "THEM" and "THEMSELVES."

Then in verses 9 through 12, he returns to "WE" and "YOU."

Whoever these people are in verses 4 through to 8, the writer does not believe them to be among his readers, for he says in verse 9

that *"but, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning YOU."*

So, why would the writer, in the middle of encouraging his readers to move on to more advanced teaching so that people may mature, begin talking about others for whom a second repentance is impossible?

Because there was a tendency or habit among the readers to lay "AGAIN" a foundation of "repentance."

Why was there this tendency?

Because they wanted to renew some people "AGAIN" to "*repentance.*"

Among the readers' reasons for focusing on elementary truth was that they hoped it would win back those who had fallen away.

The writer, who wants them to move past elementary truth, says that if they're focusing on basic principles in order to win back those who have fallen away, they're wasting their time!!

It's impossible to win them back!!

This is the writer's point in verses 4 through verse 8.

So, WHO are these people?

What of God have they experienced?

Then, what did they do, in falling away, so as to make repentance impossible?

They were at one time "*enlightened,*" they had "*tasted*" of the heavenly gift, they had been made "*partakers*" of the Holy Spirit and they had "*tasted*" the good word of God and the powers of the age to come.

The writer uses all these words, or their cognates, elsewhere in this letter:-

- "Enlightened": Hebrews 10:32.
- "Taste": Hebrews 2:9.
- "Partake" or "share" (metecho): Hebrews 2:14, 3:1, 3:14 5:13, 12:8.

In these verses, the verbs imply legitimate experience of something.

For example, in Hebrews 2:14, where it is said that people "SHARE" in flesh and blood and that Jesus "SHARED" of the same, there is no question that these were legitimate experiences.

So whatever the writer has in mind regarding these people, he is likely at the very least describing some kind of powerful experience of the things God.

Later, in Hebrews 10:32, the writer says that the readers were at one time "*enlightened*" or, "*illuminated.*"

It is likely there that he uses the word as a description of "*receiving the knowledge of the truth*" which we see in Hebrews 10:26.

John says that Jesus Christ is the Light that "*gives light to every man.*"

Every person may be enlightened, but NOT every person is saved.

Enlightened, here, suggests exposure to the truth.

The Greek word for enlightened in our text is *photizo* and it means to shed rays or to brighten up. It's where we get our English word "photo".

Light enters the shutter and an image is placed on the paper, thus a photo is produced. Light may also enter into a person's life, but having an image of God and having a personal relationship with God, are two entirely different things.

One is a two-dimensional copy of the person.

The other is the person who was photographed.

They may look the same but try and carry on a relationship with a photo!!

Our writer in Hebrews is making the distinction between a photo and the REAL thing.

The Holy Spirit may give a person a photo of God, in a sense, but the true born-again believer isn't satisfied with only a photo, he wants the REAL thing.

On the other hand the unbeliever is more than happy to carry around a photo and even show it to all his friends.

And they're content to carry God in their wallet, if you will, as God has enlightened Himself to them in this way.

But, as we'll see, even for the unbeliever, this kind of relationship doesn't really satisfy.

The question is, will they seek to know the Person or will they go back to their old ways as they reject the true God whose image they carry around with them?

These people's experience went beyond exposure.

They *"tasted of the heavenly gift."*

The Lord Jesus is the heavenly Gift!!

They had *"tasted"* of Him but had never received Him by a definite act of faith.

It is quite possible to taste without eating or drinking.

When men offered wine mixed with gall to Jesus on the cross, He tasted it but He would not drink it. (we see this in Matthew 27:34)

It is not enough to simply taste Christ, for John 6:53 tells us that unless we truly receive Him as Lord and Saviour, we have no life in us.

So we can see that simply to taste something does not necessarily imply enjoyment of it.

The figures in C.S. Lewis' *"The Great Divorce"* tasted heaven, they actually visited the place, and couldn't stand it.

David writes in Psalm 34:8, *"Oh taste and see that the Lord is good"* but it is possible for some to taste and see, quite wrongly, that the Lord is not good as far as they are concerned..

They also were made *"partakers of the Holy Spirit."*

"partaking of the Holy Spirit." doesn't necessarily mean being indwelt by Him.

It doesn't necessarily imply regeneration.

But, again, it implies some kind of strong experience of the Holy Spirit.

These people, having joined the community of God, among whom the Holy Spirit dwelt, would have had some experience of the Holy Spirit.

John 16:8 tells us that the Holy Spirit was sent to *"convict the world"* and in partaking of the Holy Spirit, perhaps these people partook of the Spirit's conviction.

Perhaps they felt the guilt of their sin.

Perhaps that's also why they fell away, because they grew weary of feeling the burden of sin by being exposed to the presence of the Holy Spirit in the community??

Just as these people had tasted of the heavenly gift, they *"tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come."*

As noted earlier, tasting doesn't equal liking.

They listened to the Word, which speaks of Jesus Christ.

To some people, the Word concerning Christ and the Gospel tastes bitter.

They decide within themselves that it is not good.

You see, it demands the yielding of one's life and obedience to God.

To some people, Jesus Christ sounds great at first. But when they truly taste the Word and understand its implications, they find it bitter.

Along with tasting the Word, the people in the writer's sights have tasted *"the powers of the age to come."*

In the coming of Christ and the Holy Spirit, heaven has broken into earth.

Part of what the people of God will experience in the heavenly land has invaded earth.

Therefore, in this place, we see *"powers"* from that place.

The writer spoke previously of these powers in Hebrews 2:4, alluding to evident *"signs and wonders with various miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit."*

The word translated *"miracles"* in that verse is the same one translated *"powers"* in Hebrews 6:5.

So the people who have fallen away had tasted these powers, these heavenly effects that were designed by God to confirm the validity of his Word concerning Christ.

The powers were designed to confirm that God's Word that people tasted, was indeed "good."

These people, then, have experienced quite a bit.

They saw all that God was offering them.

They were exposed to the truth; they *"tasted"* the wonders of heaven, God's Word and His power; they partook of the Holy Spirit - and then they fell away.

They saw what it was, and they said, *"No thank you."*

These are the people, then, who cannot be won back.

It is *"impossible to renew them again to repentance."*

The writer uses a double positive here, *"renew"* and *"again,"* which simply reinforces the hopelessness of the situation.

In saying that it is impossible to renew them to repentance, the writer implies that they at one time did, in fact, repent.

But this doesn't necessarily imply conversion.

It doesn't necessarily mean that they were born again from above!!

As we saw earlier, repentance is the FIRST part of the conversion process.

Genuine Faith is PART TWO!!!

These people had repented - they turned away from their former lifestyle and they joined the community of God, taking a good hard look at the gospel.

But the writer does NOT say that they believed it.

The implication, therefore, is that they DIDN'T believe it!!!

They failed to embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ by FAITH.

Having once repented, but having failed to believe, they cannot be brought back to repentance.

They have returned to a lifestyle of their own choosing, and they are now hopelessly lost - fundamentally and irretrievably unrepentant.

Why is this the case?

God has shown them everything He has to show them.

He has opened up His treasure chest, and they have looked it over.

They have had the advantage of seeing all that God has to offer in Jesus Christ, and they have walked away.

God has nothing more to show them!!!

Even if he were to show it to them all again, they would say:-

"No, thank you, I've seen it.....I don't want it."

In having seen God's offer and fallen away from it, *"they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put him to an open shame."* - verse 6

The word "AGAIN" does NOT appear in the original text.

This is NOT the second time they have crucified the Son of God to themselves.

This is the FIRST and FINAL time.

In crucifying God's Son to themselves, they reject the benefits of genuine crucifixion and they align themselves with those who crucified Christ.

Why was Christ crucified? Because he was a threat to the status quo. The existing state of affairs needed to be overturned, Jesus said.

So they crucified him, exposing him to shame so that all would believe that He was a failure, and that all would know that one doesn't mess with the status quo!!

The people who have fallen away would say the same thing.

If Jesus wants to mess with their version of status quo, to the cross He must go!!

In fact, they'll crucify Jesus to themselves if necessary to demonstrate their violent opposition and to warn all would-be

challengers that they are the sovereign gods of their own lives, and they won't be having anyone challenging their authority.

WHO then, are these people??

Hebrews 6:4-9

V4: *"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,*

V5: *and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,*

V6: *if they fall away, (or have fallen away) to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame."*

V7: *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;*

V8: *but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.*

V9: *But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner."*

The context in which this is found takes into consideration that some Jews wanted to go back to the old ways of the Old Covenant with it's rules and regulations.

To go back to the old and reject the New, which is the New Covenant in Christ, is to **reject** Jesus Christ outright in favour of a more earthy approach to God.

That is, they fall away **deliberately**, unwilling to separate themselves from those who actually condemned Jesus to be crucified.

After all, you **can't** touch Jesus or see Him except by faith.

But you can physically experience the Law.

You could physically go to the temple.

You could physically offer sacrifices.

You could physically observe certain days as holy.

You could physically partake in circumcision.

It didn't take much faith to participate in the ritual aspect of Judaism.

And so for many who longed for something they could touch and feel it was much easier and much more convenient to go back to the old ways.

But to go back to that which produced only death, instead of receiving the wonderful life offered by Christ, reveals much about such a profession in the Messiah.

It reveals that these make-believers had no true life at all if the LIFE-GIVER can be rejected and turned away from that easily.

Don't forget that what our writer is talking about here is NOT a mere falling into sin, but rather a total, wilful rejection and betrayal of Christ.

WHO then, are these people??

I submit for your consideration FIVE possibilities:-

- 1. Genuinely saved Christians who lose their salvation through some "horrible" sin. Of course, if this be true, then this same passage says that they could never be saved again!! Consequently, this is unacceptable.**

2. Apostates (scheming imposters)

These are people who hear the Gospel, make a profession of being Christians, become identified with a Christian church, and then abandon their profession of faith, decisively repudiate Jesus Christ, desert the Christian fellowship and take their place with the enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe that this is one group of people described in Hebrews 6:4-6.

3. Professed believers who have only "tasted" the things of God and never really "swallowed" them.

This is entirely unsupportable because the same Greek word "tasted" is used of Jesus in Hebrews 2:9 who *"by the grace of God tasted death for every man."*

4. Jewish professing believers living while the Temple was still standing. (This view is supported by Scofield)

These people halt short of faith in Christ after advancing to the very threshold of salvation, even "going along with" the Holy Spirit in His work of enlightenment and conviction.

It is not said that these people had faith.

They are like the spies at Kadesh-Barnea in Deut. 1:19-26 who saw the land, had the very fruit of it in their hands, and yet **TURNED BACK!!**

I believe that this is another group of people described in Hebrews 6:4-6.

5. Christian Backsliders who are in grave danger of committing the "sin unto death". (1st John 5:16-17)

This sin results in the premature physical death of the believer where God administers the ultimate discipline due to unconfessed

continual sin of a serious nature.

Immediate confession of these sins under the concept of 1st John 1:9 is the only possible hope for such Christians.

I believe that this is yet another group of people described in Hebrews 6:4-6.

Examples:

1st Corinthians 11:27-30

Acts 5:1-11 (Ananias and Sapphiras)

1st John 2:21-22

1st John 5:16-17

Let's briefly study the spiritual experiences of some people in the Bible to see if we might be able to find an answer to this question.

Judas:

In Mark 3:13-19, Jesus chooses His twelve disciples.

One of these was Judas Iscariot.

Mark 3:14,15 states Jesus would *"send them out to preach and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons."*

Mark 6:7-13 records the twelve's first mission.

Mark 6:12,13 reads, *"So they went out and preached that people should repent."*

"And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them."

There is no indication in this text or others that could be cited that Judas was not preaching, healing and casting out demons like the other disciples.

And his ability to cast out demons cannot be attributed to Satan.

The Lord Jesus demonstrated the appalling lack of logic for such a thing in Mark 3:20-27.

Further, if there had been something "different" about Judas, the others would surely have noticed.

But we see from John 13:21-30 that when Jesus predicted He was to be betrayed by one of the twelve, NO-ONE suspected Judas!!

So Judas is preaching the Gospel, performing miracles and casting out demons by the power of God!!

And he spent three and a half years as one of Jesus' disciples!!

So could it be said then that Judas had been "*enlightened?*"

Had he "*tasted the heavenly gift*" and "*become a partaker of the Holy Spirit?*"

He certainly would have tasted the Word of God, but he couldn't say with Jeremiah, "*When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.*" (Jeremiah 15:16)

Did Judas taste "*the good word of God and the powers of the age to come?*" that we read about in verse 5??

If not, then how would you describe his spiritual experience.?

Now for the most important question, "Was Judas ever saved?"

IF he was, at what point did he lose his salvation?

Also, why did Jesus refer to him as "*a devil*" and "*the son of perdition*" in John 6:70 and 17:12?

If Judas was never saved, could he then be a prime example of a hypocrite, an apostate, a "make-believer", who fits the description of Hebrews 6:4-6?

John 6:64-71 makes it clear that Judas was NOT a believer.

John 13:11 tells us that Judas had never been cleansed.

The Lord singled Judas out as one who had never had the bath of redemption.

In John 18:8-9 we see that Judas had never been given to Christ by God the Father.

2. Simon the Sorcerer:

Acts 8:4-25 records the first preaching of the Gospel in Samaria.

Among the people living in the city was a man named Simon who "*practiced sorcery*" (Acts 8:9).

Verse 12 of Acts 9 tells us that upon the preaching of Philip, the people in the city believed the Gospel.

Then Luke writes in verse 13, "*Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptised he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.*"

Simon also professed to be a believer, was baptised, and followed Philip, fascinated by the miracles that Philip performed.

From what follows, it seems clear that Simon had not been born again.

He was a professor , but **NOT** a possessor.

Those who teach salvation by baptism are faced with a dilemma here.

Simon had been baptised, but he was still in his sins, unsaved!!

Luke next records the arrival of the apostles Peter and John to Samaria.

They laid their hands on those who believed and *"they received the Holy Spirit"* (v.17).

Now, was Simon among those who *"received the Holy Spirit?"*

Further, had Simon been *"enlightened?"*

Had he *"tasted of the heavenly gift?"*

Was he among those who *"have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come?"* - Verses 5-6

Your answers here are vital!!!

We see in verse 18 and following that Simon proceeds to attempt to buy the ability to lay hands on people so they may receive the Holy Spirit.

In verse 20, Peter strongly rebukes Simon for this request.

"Your money perish with you..."

According to John 3:16, NO believer will ever perish!!

Then Peter says to Simon in verse 21, *"You have neither part nor portion in this matter, (in other words, he was not in the fellowship) "for your heart is not right in the sight of God."* - this is a fitting description of an unsaved person.

Someone whose *"heart is not right in the sight of God"* cannot possibly be saved!!

So at this point there is no doubt Simon is not saved.

But what about previously?

Did Simon genuinely believe in verse 13 after which he was baptised?

If he did, then he LOST his salvation rather quickly - in the space of 9 verses!!

If Simon was never saved, then again, it must be asked, could Hebrews 6:4-6 describe his spiritual experience?

If it does, then here is another example of a person who fits the description but who was never truly saved.

Matthew 7:21-23:

This passage states that, "many" will cry out to Jesus at the final judgment saying:-

"Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your Name, cast out demons in Your Name, and done many wonders in Your Name?" (v.22).

Please note, the miracles are done in the Name of Christ.

Jesus does not deny their miracle working abilities or the Source.

However, He does declare to them, "I NEVER knew you; depart from Me" (v.23).

Again, does Hebrews 6:4-6 describe the spiritual experiences of these people who NEVER actually knew Christ.?

Conclusion:

It is clear that the spiritual experiences of Judas, Simon the Sorcerer and others apostates like them could very possibly be described by the passage in Hebrews 6:4-6.

So this passage does not necessarily describe genuinely saved individuals who are in danger of losing their salvation.

The writer's warning in 6:4-6 is similar to that of 4:11:-

"Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience."

We must diligently resist any temptation to merely PROFESS faith in Christ and then to renounce Him in the heat of suffering and persecution.

The apostates among the congregation have heard the truth repeatedly without an appropriate response.

If these apostates and professing Jewish believers proceed with their plans to return to Judaism, then, according to the writer, it will be "impossible" for them to genuinely repent again since their hearts will have become hardened against Christ.

Arminians often teach that people can be saved, then lose their salvation, and then repent and be saved again!!!

However, the word "impossible" in verse 5 precludes this possibility.

In one of Charles Spurgeon's papers entitled; *"A Defence of Calvinism"*, he says:-

"I do not know how some people, who believe that a Christian can fall from grace, manage to be happy.

It must be a very commendable thing in them to get through a day without despair.

If I did not believe the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, I think I should be of all men the most miserable, because I would lack any ground of comfort." (C.H. Spurgeon).

You know, many people will avail themselves of the things of God for all sorts of reasons.

Unbelievers will do so because they believe it to be expedient and in their best interests at the time.

But once God doesn't seem to be needed any longer they go their own way until, again, they find that God may be necessary in their lives.

This was often the case with rebellious Israel.

Psalm 78:34-37:-

"When He slew them, then they sought Him;

And they returned and sought earnestly for God.

V35: Then they remembered that God was their Rock,

And the Most High God their Redeemer.

V36: Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouth,

And they lied to Him with their tongue;

V37: For their heart was not steadfast with Him, Nor were they faithful in His covenant."

Their situation caused them to seek God, but their hearts were never really united with His.

They were not loyal to God, they were only loyal to themselves.

Pink comments on this by saying that:-

"a conscience terrified with the prospect of hell, will cause a man to seek Christ after a natural way.

It is but the instinct of self-preservation at work.

Add to this, the craving for happiness which self-love ever seeks, and hearing that such happiness is to be found only in Christ, it is little wonder that multitudes seek Him now for what they can get from Him, as of old they sought Him for the sake of the loaves and fishes."

And so the picture we have here in our text can be a picture of a person who has been in the middle of what God is doing in the lives of other people.

This person sees the advantage of being united to the works of God and yet not truly being united to God Himself.

With this in mind our writer then says that with all of the evidence this person has, and all the information which is at his disposal, and all of the experiences he has witnessed, if this person, who is now much more informed than most, turns away from the things of God and rejects and betrays Christ, in spite of what he has seen, then this person will find it impossible to be renewed again to repentance.

This is a warning from God Himself to the church not to take our salvation for granted, or to think that it makes no difference how we live and represent Christ in this world.

Andrew Murray correctly says:-

"Scripture speaks most solemn words of warning in regard to the possibility of receiving the grace of God in vain, of beginning well, and then falling away from grace."

The parable of the seed on different types of soil shows this clearly. But, for you and I who have welcomed and believed in Christ by faith, and still mess up at times, it does NOT mean that we have LOST that priceless gift of salvation which was received in gratitude and thankfulness.

Dr. Guthrie points this out when he says:-

"Some have been deeply troubled lest they have committed such a sin, but no one with a state of mind so hardened as to hold up the Son of God to contempt would ever be concerned about a question like that.

The concern itself is evidence that the Holy Spirit is still active in that person's life!!"

Praise God when your conscience still fears that you may have displeased your most Holy God during those times.

It's when sin no longer is seen as sinful that we must worry. But if we are believers in Christ and truly desire to seek God, even in those times that we've sinned against Him, we know without a shadow of a doubt that He will be there for us.

1 John 2:1 *"My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin.*

And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous."

John 10:28-30:-

"And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

V29: *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.*

V30: *I and My Father are One."*

John 6:38-40

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

V39: *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.*

V40: *And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."*

Romans 8:37-39

"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

V38: *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,*

V39: *neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

But with so great a hope should come a great desire to serve and please and love the One who gave us life and this is why Paul says in **Romans 6:12-13:-**

V12: *"Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.*

V13: *And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God, as being*

alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."

The Spirit of God who has sealed us for the day of Redemption is the same Holy Spirit who enables us to accomplish God's will to His glory.

Praise God for the never-ending, sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of God's children!!!

There is another such passage in Hebrews that has often been used by those who hold the Arminian view and that passage is found in Hebrews 10:26-31:-

Hebrews 10:26-31:

26. "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."

31. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

The apparent meaning is that Jesus' sacrifice does not cover certain kinds of sins committed by Christians.

Repeated, intentional sins will evidently forfeit God's acceptance and bring us back under his judgment.

I have two serious problems with this interpretation:

How can any Christian ever have confidence he/she is secure, since we all continue to commit sins intentionally???

The churches that hold this view require that people get saved over and over again after each moral lapse, and that the only way to be secure is to never sin intentionally. This leads many to give up altogether.

Also, those of you who have very sensitive consciences are often troubled by passages like this.

How can we square this interpretation with statements by the same author in the same chapter (not to mention numerous other passages) which affirm the complete forgiveness of Christians? (See Hebrews 10:14,17.)

Is it reasonable to conclude the author changed his mind about this issue?

If God inspired this letter (which he did), did He change His mind about such an important issue?

Wouldn't it be more reasonable to look for another interpretation of this passage which was true to the language and harmonized with these other passages?

That is what I want to do.

My goal is that as a result of this study you will be more confident of the complete forgiveness available through Christ, and that you will be equipped to help others who are confused on this important issue.

Interpret the passages in context

One of the cardinal rules of biblical interpretation is that we must interpret any specific passage in light of its overall context.

Like any other book, the Bible can be made to appear full of contradictions and downright foolish if its contents are examined out of context.

The story is told about the well-meaning but foolish young Christian who wanted guidance from God. He prayed that God would lead him through his Word, and then closed his eyes, opened his Bible and put his finger on the page. "Judas went out and hanged himself." Troubled, he repeated the practice. "Go and do likewise." Extremely agitated at this point, he prayed and tried it one more time. "What you do, do quickly," he read!

We laugh because the story is so outrageous. But it is hardly less outrageous to interpret verse 26 the above way, once we examine the context . . .

In our passage, it is the *following* context that is determinative.

After making a *general* statement in verses 26-27, the author explains more *specifically* what he means by "sinning wilfully" in verses 28-31 (read).

In verse 28, he alludes to a certain kind of sin in the Old Testament system, since his audience was familiar with it. He calls it "setting aside the law of Moses."

Under that system, most sins were atoned for by offering an animal sacrifice. This included things like intentional acts like theft (Lev. 6:2-7). But if someone rejected the God of Israel by abandoning his prescribed way of approaching him and instead turned to idol worship, this was a capital crime (Deut. 17:2-6).

The author is not arguing that we should stone non-Christians! Rather, he is arguing by *a fortiori* logic: If Israelites faced physical death for rejecting God under the lesser revelation of the Old Testament system, those who reject God's greater revelation (Jesus Christ) can expect a "severer punishment" - God's eternal judgment.

Verse 29 is the key to understanding what it means to "sin wilfully."

Let's look at it carefully:

"has trampled underfoot the Son of God" - This means scorning Jesus' claim to be God's Son.

"has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant" - "Unclean" is literally "common."

This means to deny that Jesus' death had any redemptive significance. *"His death did nothing to pay for our sins; it was just like any other death."*

"has insulted the Spirit of grace" –

It is God's Spirit who convicts our hearts when we hear the gospel that we need charity ("grace" is *charis*).

Because we can never meet God's perfect standard by our own good works, we need the "charity" of God's free and undeserved gift of forgiveness through Jesus Christ's sacrificial death. This means to reject the Spirit's personal urging to admit our need for charity.

Clearly then, to "sin wilfully" in verse 26 means to reject God the Son, Jesus Christ as God's Saviour.

Evidently, some of the Jewish people who had been a part of this group had done this. They had come to "the knowledge of the truth" (verse 26) - they understood Jesus' claim to be Messiah and that His death was God's full payment for their sins. They may even have identified with the Christian community for a time.

But when belief in Jesus Christ began to be persecuted by the state while Judaism remained a protected religion, they quickly shifted ground:

***"He wasn't the Messiah. His death doesn't forgive sin. I can get to God just fine by offering animal sacrifices through the priest at the Temple."* (That they did this seems clear because the whole argument of chapters 7-10 is that it is now wrong to do this.)**

The author's conclusion is very different. He says once they understand Jesus' claim to be God's eternal Son and that His death is God's full payment for their sins, to reject Jesus Christ is to reject God's ONLY provision for their sins!!

What was the *right* way to approach God under the Old Testament system (offering animal sacrifices) has now become *rejection* of God after Jesus' complete fulfilment of those sacrifices.

As mentioned earlier, those holding the Arminian position confidently assure us that their mistaken view is amply supported by some 100 Biblical passages.

We have examined some of these passages already. Let's now continue to examine the more commonly used verses.

Our next topical category of these verses is seen below:-

2. These passages deal with the act of conversion itself:

Matthew 10:32-33; John 8:51; 1st Corinthians 15:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Colossians 1:23; Hebrews 2:1-4; 12:25, 29; James 2:14-26; 1st John 3:6, 8, 9; 5:18; 2nd John 1:9.

Note a few of these passages:

a) "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death*" (John 8:51).

Just what "saying" (teaching, commandment) is Jesus referring to here?

In a previous conversation (John 6:28) a crowd had asked Him: "*What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?*"

Our Lord answered: "*This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him [Christ] whom He [the Father] hath sent*" (John 6:29).

b) *"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain"*
(1st Cor. 15:1-2).

The key phrase here is *"unless ye have believed in vain."*

What does this mean?
Paul explains it in 15:12.

There were apparently in Corinth some professing believers who denied the resurrection of Christ.

The apostle thus says they were NOT saved in the first place and their faith was in vain since it is impossible for a denier of Christ's resurrection to experience the new birth.

The little word "if" in 15:2 has also bothered some.

But here in the Greek New Testament it is in the first-class condition and should be rendered "SINCE."

This is also true concerning the "if" in Colossians 1:23.

c) *Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God"*
(1st John 3:9).

Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest writes:

"The infinitive in the present tense in Greek always speaks of continuous, habitual action, never the mere fact of the action....the translation therefore is, 'He is not able to habitually sin.'

The Greek text here holds no warrant for the erroneous teaching of sinless perfection." (In the Last Days, p. 150)

The same Greek construction also holds true for 1st John 3:6; 5:18.

d) *"But whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever*

***shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven"*(Mt. 10:32, 33).**

At the beginning of this chapter Jesus is instructing his apostles before sending them out to preach for the first time.

In the above-quoted verses He reminds them of the seriousness of their task. They are to warn their hearers that to personally reject the Messiah here on earth would someday mean His rejection of them in heaven.

3. These passages deal with Christian rewards:

1st Corinthians 3:11-15; 2nd Corinthians 5:9, 10; Galatians 6:9; Colossians 3:24, 25; 2nd Timothy 2:12; James 1:12; 2nd John 1:8; Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21.

a. *"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us"*(2nd Tim. 2:12).

The "deny" here can be tied into 1st Corinthians 3:15: *"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."*

Thus the denial here is that of REWARDS.

b) *"Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons"*(Col. 3:24, 25).

4. These passages deal with missing God's best:

1st Corinthians 9:27; 10:5; Hebrews 3:11-19; 4:1-16; 12:14, 15.

a. *"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway"*(1st Cor. 9:27).

The word "castaway" here is "adokimos", which means "disapproved."

Paul was not in the least concerned about his SALVATION from God (2nd Tim. 1:12), but he was very concerned about his SERVICE for God.

He did not want to be set on a spiritual shelf somewhere.

b) *"But with many of them God was 'not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness'"* (1st Cor. 10:5).

Also, *"So I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest"* (Heb. 3:11).

These verses review the tragic Old Testament account of Israel's unbelief at Kadesh-barnea in Numbers 14, where they refused to enter Palestine.

Because of this, God would not allow anyone over twenty (Joshua and Caleb excepted) to enter.

Even Moses (because of a later sin) was refused passage.

However, all this had nothing whatever to do with SPIRITUAL damnation, but rather with PHYSICAL destruction.

It simply (and sadly) meant that most of that generation would never get out of the hot desert into a land flowing with milk and honey.

In the Psalms we are told of God's reaction to Israel's terrible sin in the wilderness. Note:

"For their heart was not right with Him, neither were they steadfast in His covenant. But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned He His anger away, and did not stir up all His wrath" (Ps. 78:37, 38).

"Many times did He deliver them; but they provoked Him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. Nevertheless He regarded their affliction, when He heard their cry" (Ps. 106:43, 44).

Moses' eventual salvation certainly cannot be questioned even though he was not allowed to enter the land. However, he is mentioned in the New Testament. (Mt. 17:1-4).

The point of all the above is simply this: the author of Hebrews uses this historical example to exhort believers to press on in their Christian lives and enter into God's perfect will.

"Let us therefore, fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it....Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same manner of unbelief" (Heb. 4:1, 11).

5. These passages deal with God's discipline:

a. *"And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin"* (Rom. 14:23).

b. *"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body"* (1st Cor. 11:29).

c. *"Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith"* (1st Tim. 5:12).

The problem word found in each of these three verses is the word "DAMNATION."

In each case the Greek word could be better rendered by the word "JUDGEMENT."

In the first passage Paul refers to a believer eating certain foods he was not sure God wanted him to eat.

In the second passage the apostle speaks of believers partaking of the Lord's table with known sin in their lives.

In the third passage he describes young believing widows who had displayed a worldly attitude toward sex and marriage.

While none of these parties involved faced DAMNATION, they all would, however, be JUDGED by God.

Peter summarizes all this and uses the SAME Greek word.

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" (1st Pet. 4:17; see also Heb. 12:5-11).

6. These passages deal with fruit-bearing, testimony, and Christian maturity:

Matthew 5:13; John 8:31; 15:1-6; Acts 13:43; 14:22; James 1:26; 2nd Peter 1:9-11; 1st John 2:24.

a. *"As He spake these words, many believed on Him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:30-32).*

Our Lord would later amplify this statement: *"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).*

While all Christians have life, only fruit-bearing Christians enjoy abundant life.

b. *"If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned" (John 15:6).*

We note that it is MEN here who gather these fruitless branches and burn them, and NOT God.

A similar example is given by Christ during the Sermon on the Mount.

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men" (Mt. 5:13).

These verses thus describe useless testimony before men, and NOT lost salvation before God.

7. These passages deal with a believer being influenced by false doctrines:

2nd Corinthians 11:2-4; Galatians 5:4; Colossians 2:4, 8, 18; 1st Thessalonians 3:5; 1st Timothy 1:6, 19, 20; 6:20, 21; 2nd Timothy 2:18, 26.

One of the reasons a Christian is to mature in the faith is:

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive"
(Eph. 4:14).

Here Paul sadly admits it is tragically possible for a true believer to become entangled with false doctrine.

a. The false doctrine of legalism.

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4).

This verse is probably the favourite proof-text of Arminian theology, especially the phrase *"ye are fallen from grace."*

But it must be asked just what had CAUSED them to fall?

It was a frantic (and fruitless) effort to fulfil the Mosaic law.

Does this then mean that a Christian who does his very best to perform good works will lose his salvation?

It certainly does not!!

Paul faults the Galatians not because of their evil against the law, but because of their effort to keep the law.

Thus, to fall from grace is the act of allowing the legalism of law to prevent one from enjoying the full liberty of love.

It is possible that both Peter (Gal. 2:11-14) and James (Acts 21:18-26) "fell from grace" for awhile over this matter. (See also 1st Tim. 1:6, 7.)

b. The false doctrine of worldly wisdom and philosophy.

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8; see also 1st Tim. 6:20, 21).

c. The false doctrine of angel worship (Col. 2:18).

d. The false doctrine of a past resurrection theory (see 1 Tim. 1:19, 20; 2 Tim. 2:18).

Let's now settle this matter once and for all by clearly outlining below clear proof from the Scriptures that a truly born again believer is forever saved and cannot ever do anything to lose this precious salvation.

The Proofs of Eternal Security

Now what are the proofs of this precious Biblical doctrine?

Does the Bible indeed teach once saved always saved?

It surely does.!!!

In fact, the work of the entire Trinity guarantees it.

1. The work of the Father:

a. **Because of his plan and programme** (Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:3-11; 2:7). Note the features of this plan.

(1) **To predestinate all those he foreknew to be conformed to the image of Christ** (Rom. 8:29).

(2) **To accept all those IN Christ** (Eph. 1:6; Col. 3:3).

This means that the believer has as much right to be in heaven as Christ does, for he is IN Christ.

- (3) **To call, justify, and glorify all those accepted IN Christ (Rom. 8:30).**

Note especially the last phrase of this verse, "*them he also glorified.*"

Glorification, of course, will not take place until the rapture (1st Cor. 15:51-54).

But here in Romans 8:30 Paul puts the word in the past tense.

In other words, in God's sight the believer is already glorified in heaven with Christ.

This is the strongest verse in the Bible on eternal security.

- (4) **To gather them all in Christ in the fullness of time (Eph. 1:10).**

- (5) **To display those He has gathered in Christ as trophies of His grace throughout eternity (Eph. 2:7).**

b. **Because of His power (Jn. 10:29; Rom. 4:21; 8:31-39; 14:4; 1st Cor. 1:8, 9; Eph. 3:20; Phil. 1:6; 2nd Tim. 1:12; 4:18; Heb. 7:25; 1st Pet. 1:5; Jude 24).**

c. **Because of His love (Rom. 5:7-11; 8:31-33).**

d. **Because of his faithfulness in chastening His own. (Heb. 12:1-11).**

2. The work of the Son:

a. **Because of His promises (Jn. 5:24; 6:37; 10:27, 28).**

- b. **Because of His prayer** (Jn. 17:9-12, 15, 20).
- c. **Because of His death** (Isaiah 53:5, 11; Mt. 26:28; Jn. 19:30).

Here the law of double jeopardy is seen.

This law states that a man cannot be tried or punished twice for the same crime.

Through His death Christ was punished for my sin.

By accepting him as Saviour I agreed to allow Him to pay my sin debt.

But if I must eventually pay for my own sin in hell (because I fell from grace prior to death) then the righteous Judge of the universe becomes guilty of breaking the law of double jeopardy.

- d. **Because of His resurrection** (Rom. 6:3-10; Col. 2:12-15).
- e. **Because of His present ministry.**
 - (1) **His work as our Advocate in heaven assures our eternal security.** (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; 1 Jn. 2:1).
 - (2) **His work as our intercessor in heaven assures our eternal security** (Jn. 17:1-26; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:23-25).

Dr. John Walvoord writes:

"The present ministry of Christ in glory has to do with the eternal security of those on earth who are saved.

Christ both intercedes and serves as our advocate.

As intercessor, He has in view the weakness, ignorance, and immaturity of the believer—things concerning which there is no guilt.

In this ministry Christ not only prays for His own who are in the world and at every point of their need (Lk. 22:31, 32; Jn. 17:9, 15, 20; Rom. 8:34), but on the grounds of His own sufficiency in His unchanging priesthood, He guarantees that they will be kept saved forever. (Jn. 14:19; Rom. 5:10; Heb. 7:25)." (Major Bible Themes, p. 226)

The summary statement of all the above is Romans 5:10: "*For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."*

The glorious truth Paul is literally shouting about here is this:- Jesus Christ died to get me saved, but He now lives to keep me saved.!!

This is why Christ is said in Hebrews 5:9 to be the author of eternal salvation. (How long is "eternal"?)

3. The work of the Holy Spirit:

- a. He regenerates the believer (Jn. 3:3-7; Titus 3:5; Jas. 1:18; 1st Pet. 1:23).**

This means the Christian has a **new** nature that **wants** to do the things of God.

- b. He baptizes the believer permanently into the body of Christ (Rom. 6:3, 4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:4, 5; Col. 2:12).**

The believer thus becomes "bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh."

- c. He permanently indwells the believer (Jn. 7:37-39; 14:16; Rom. 8:9; 1st Cor. 2:12; 3:16; 6:19; 1st Jn. 3:24).**

Note especially John 14:16:-

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever."

- d. He permanently seals the believer (2nd Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:13, 14; 4:30).

It has already been noted that Romans 8:30 is probably the strongest verse in the Bible concerning eternal security.

The second strongest would doubtless be Ephesians 4:30:

"And do not grieve [literally, stop grieving] the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

What is this "day of redemption"?

According to Romans 8:23 it is a reference to the "rapture". (The time when Jesus Christ shall personally come and collect all living believers on earth and escort them to Heaven)

In other words, the child of God is permanently sealed by the Spirit of God until the day of the rapture itself.

- e. He strengthens the believer (Eph. 3:16).
 f. He prays for the believer (Rom. 8:26).

All throughout the Word of God, both the Old Testament and New Testament, we see God's faithfulness to securely hold on us and to bring us through to the end.

This is made graphically clear in John 6:39-40:-

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."*

40. *"And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." {how long is "everlasting"?)*

Paul also tells us in Romans chapter 8 that nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of Christ, and in Hebrews 13:5-6, Jesus promises, "*I will never desert you nor will I ever forsake you.*"

It is sad that the followers of Jacob Arminius, who hold the Arminian position regarding the issue of eternal security, (that is, they believe that at any given point in a believer's life, he or she is either saved or lost,) live in constant fear and trembling regarding their ultimate destiny.

There is not sufficient time to show the fallacy of the Arminian position regarding the matter of eternal security, however, I will refer you to verse 30 of Romans chapter 8 which says:-

*"And whom He predestined, these He also called, and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, **these He also glorified.**"*

Note especially the last phrase of this verse, "*these He also glorified.*"

Now, "*glorification*" of course will not take place until the Rapture of the church and we see this truth set out very clearly in 1st Corinthians 51-54 and in other passages.

But here in Romans 8:30, Paul puts the word in the past tense!!!

In other words, in God's sight, the believer is already glorified in Heaven with Christ.!!!

In Romans 5:10, we read, "*For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His Life.*"

The glorious truth that Paul is literally shouting out here is this:-

"Jesus Christ died to get me saved, but now, as our great High Priest, He lives to keep me saved.!!"

This is why it is said in Hebrews 5:9, that Jesus Christ is *"the source of eternal salvation."*

We see in such verses as 2nd Corinthian.1:22, 5:5, Ephesians 1:13, 14, 4:30, that at salvation the Holy Spirit is said to seal the believer.

For example, in Ephesians 4:30, we read these words which are addressed to believers, *"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by Whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."*

What is this "day of redemption."??

Well, as stated previously, according to Romans 8:23, it is a clear reference to the Rapture of the Church.!!

In other words, the child of God is permanently sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of the Rapture itself, after which, the believer will be in Heaven in a glorified, resurrection body, with the Lord, Himself.!!
Remember our Lord's Words in John 14:16-17:-

*"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you FOREVER;
That is the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides WITH you, and will be IN you."*

The eternal security of God's sheep is assured in several ways.

Firstly, by definition—we have "*eternal life*," and that cannot be conditional and still be eternal.

Secondly, this everlasting life is a GIFT, - NOT something that we earn or merit.

Thirdly, Romans 11:29 tells us that the gifts and calling of God are IRREVOCABLE.!! (unalterable; incapable of being revoked)

It stands to reason that since we were NOT saved by our own good works, but solely by His GRACE, then we cannot be lost by our "bad works."

Romans 11:6:-

"And if by grace, {our salvation} then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work."

Ephesians 2:8-9:-

*8. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,
9. not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

Most importantly, Jesus gave us His promise that His sheep will NEVER perish, and that His promise cannot be broken.

Should the reader require additional information on this subject, or on other Biblical subjects, please feel free to drop us a line at:-

**New Start Bible Ministries
18 Larkspur Place, Forest Lakes,
Thornlie. W.A. 6988**

Phone: (61 8) 9322-9822

**Or, visit our church at the Huntingdale Community Centre,
Holmes Street, Huntingdale.**

We are a family-oriented, fundamental, evangelical and friendly church.

Worship Service - Sundays 10.00am. (Sunday School and Creche, too)

