

Can Christians Be Lost?**2 Peter 2:20-22**

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

Some say that once you become a Christian you can never _____ your salvation. Is this true? God is the author of Scripture, and we can _____ the Bible because God was behind the writing of every verse, every chapter, and every book. We can trust it to give us the _____ that God wanted us to know, truth that is sufficient to _____ us to eternal life. We need that truth, so we go to the Bible.

The doctrine of “once saved, always saved” suggests that the Christian, once truly saved, can never do anything to lose his salvation and finally be _____ in hell. This belief says Christians have an unconditional _____ in Christ. They suggest that any person who _____ to be a Christian and falls away was never truly converted in the first place. They say that Christians do sin; but when they sin, they are punished in this life and forfeit privileges in heaven, but not entrance into heaven.

But is heaven conditional? What is a condition? A conditional statement is usually introduced by _____ such as “if” or “unless.” When Jesus said in Luke 13:3 that unless you _____, you will perish; we understand that repentance is a condition to keep from being lost. **Read what the Bible says in 1 John 1:6-7.** There are _____.

Our reading today from God’s inspired and all-sufficient Word comes from 2 Peter 2:20-22.

The doctrine of “once-saved, always saved” is built upon the belief that God’s _____ is unconditional. Some say once grace is given, a Christian cannot _____ it. But the doctrine of unconditional security _____ the conditional, qualifying statements in Scripture about whom the grace of God saves. Several passages show our _____ is conditional. We must remain _____ to God.

For instance, the Lord Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone _____ My word he will never see death” (John 8:51). But what will happen if a person _____ keeping God’s Word? The Lord said, “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me (now notice that the branch is already in them) that doesn’t bear fruit, He _____; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit” (John 15:2). When a branch in Christ no longer bears _____, it’s taken away. John 15:6 says, “If anyone does not _____ in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.” This is the _____ of a Christian who will not bear fruit.

Moreover, your _____ life matters. A Christian who turns to fleshly _____ can lose his soul, but one who puts away sin can _____ with God. **Read Romans 8:12-13.**

Morality is a condition of salvation.

The Lord expects His people to hold _____ to their faith. Our salvation depends on it. First Corinthians 15:1-2 says, “Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word that I preached to you—unless you believed in vain.” If they don’t hold firmly to their faith, they will have believed in vain and could lose their salvation.

Read Colossians 1:21-23. Holding firmly to the _____ is a condition of our salvation.

Remaining active in _____ attendance and in our efforts for the gospel is a condition of our salvation. In Hebrews 10:25 the inspired writer noted that some Christians had _____ assembling with the church. In response to this he said, “For if we go on sinning _____ after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries” (verses 26-27). Yes, a Christian who quits on God can lose the _____ of eternal life. God expects us to _____ involved in church as long as we are able.

The second epistle of Peter was written to Christians _____ them to remain faithful and not to fall away to immorality or false teaching. **Read 2 Peter 2:20-21.** This clear Scripture shows that if a Christian gets overcome by sin he can find himself _____ off than before he became a Christian. It would have been _____ if he had never known the way of the Lord.

In 1 John 1:6-7 the Bible says, “If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet we walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.” This was written to Christians. Our freedom from sin is conditional on whether we follow the _____ or follow the _____. I’ve presented several _____ that God has placed on our salvation, and there are many more. But if there were just one, just one Scriptural condition on this list, that would be enough to show that our salvation is conditional.

In addition, the Scriptures often warn Christians to _____ faithful and committed to the Lord. **Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.** Paul knew that he could lose his crown of life if he didn’t _____ himself and stay free from sin.

Read Galatians 5:19-21 where Paul warned the Galatian Christians about the deeds of the flesh. Why would Paul forewarn Christians about these sins keeping them out of _____ if Christians couldn’t lose their salvation?

Our faith and commitment to Christ is a lifetime _____. The Lord Jesus said, “whoever _____ my word and _____ him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life” (John 5:24). This passage says the believer possesses eternal life but doesn’t say _____ about the person who stops

believing or stops hearing the word. John 8:51 says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, that if anyone keeps my word, he shall never see _____.” But what about the person who _____ keeping the Word? John 3:36 says, “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not _____ the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” One has _____ life as long as he believes and obeys. But if he stops believing or he stops obeying, he can _____ that life.

Can a person stop believing? Some think not, but we have an _____ in Scripture of Israel coming out of Egypt. Study Psalm 106, and study it closely. Psalm 106:12 says, “Then they believed His words; They sang His praise.” But verse 13 says, “they quickly _____ His works.” In verse 21 the Bible says, “they forgot God their Savior.” And then Psalm 106:24 to 25 says, “Then they despised the pleasant land; They did not _____ in His word, but grumbled in their tents; They did not _____ to the voice of the LORD.” Can people _____ believing and hearing God? The Israelites did. And, my friend, you can, too. Beware!

In the parable of the sower, Jesus described different kinds of soil: there’s the soil that’s beside the _____, then there is the _____ soil, the _____ soil, and the _____ soil. These types of soil actually describe people’s _____. Jesus tells how the Word of God or the seed is _____ in the rocky soil and what happened. The Lord said, “Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, they receive the word with joy; and these have no firm _____; they believe for a while, and in time of _____ fall away” (Luke 8:13). They stopped believing. Sadly, we’ve all known people like this who believed at one point in their life and quit believing in another.

Paul predicted, “But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will _____ from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons” (1 Timothy 4:1). When you stop _____ to the Lord and His Word, and you begin to pay attention to others, you can stop believing. To believe in the Lord Jesus means that you believe what He _____. How can you say you believe the Lord if you will not _____ the things that He teaches.

Read Hebrews 3:12-14 that is written to brothers in Christ. To fall away is to abandon the Lord willfully. These brothers had been deceived and hardened by _____ and they lost their faith. We are partakers of Christ only if we hold firm our faith to the _____.

At this point someone says, “Well, Phil, don’t you know no one can _____ us out of the Lord’s hand? Don’t you know that we can never be separated from God’s _____?” Yes, I well know the two precious _____ first found in John 10:27-29 and second in Romans 8:35-39; I know them quite well. They say that no one and nothing can _____ us from God. These verses, however, don’t take into account what happens to a person who _____ to separate himself from God. Jude 21 advises us to “keep yourselves in the love of God”; and John 15:9-10 teaches us that we must _____ in God’s love. Oh, no one else

can separate us from God, but we can decide to _____ the Lord. Christians can _____ to fall away! They can choose to leave God; and, sadly, sadly, many have.

Another person objects, “Well, if a Christian falls away, he was never _____ converted in the first place.” Are you sure? Have you never _____ your mind? **Read what the Bible says in Hebrews 6:4-6.** It’s clear that these people were _____ Christians. They were enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift, partakers of the Holy Spirit, and they’ve tasted or experienced the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come. You couldn’t have these spiritual blessings _____ of Christ. You can’t fall away from something unless you were first _____ of it. These Christians fell away by _____ rejecting Jesus Christ. Others could not get them to repent because they didn’t _____ to repent. To fall away is a willful _____ to abandon the faith.

In a different situation, Galatians speaks of Christians who followed a _____ gospel than Paul preached by _____ circumcision and the Law on Gentile Christians. Paul said, “You’ve been _____ from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have _____ from grace” (Galatians 5:4). Here are people under the grace of God, but they fell away from it; they severed themselves from Christ. To be severed implies that they _____ belonged to Him. My friend, a Christian can fall from grace. I pray that you never do.

Thank God for a second law of _____ for Christians who have sinned. Even when a Christian strays from the truth, God has a way for him to _____ to salvation. Like the prodigal son, he can come _____ to God.

When Simon the Sorcerer, in Acts 8, offered money to buy the apostles’ gift, Peter _____ him for his sin. Peter said, “You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity” (Acts 8:21-24”. God expects Christians to _____ of their sins and _____ for forgiveness if they wish to be pardoned.

The Bible says, “If we _____ our sins, He is faithful and righteous to _____ us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). God is faithful to His people. He will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, if...if...we confess our sins, repent of them, and ask for his forgiveness. God offers _____, but there are conditions to our forgiveness.

The same thing is true for the person who wants to become a Christian. The Lord Jesus offers salvation as a gift to those who will believe, who will repent of their sins, who will confess His name before others, and who will be baptized. Baptism is an immersion in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). Meeting conditions won’t earn you salvation; but if you fail to meet them, you cannot enjoy the grace and blessing of God.