

Eternal Security?

Can a believer lose their salvation?

Return Church

Sunday October 4th 2026

Your salvation

- Regardless of what you believe or don't believe about God, the one thing that you cannot afford to get wrong is this matter of your salvation. I have questions for you:
 - Have you every been saved? Are you sure?
 - Have your sins been forgiven? Are you born-again?
 - Does Christ now live in your heart? Are you living in Christ?
 - Is there any evidence of your salvation? In other words, has your life been changed or are you still the way you always have been?
 - If you were to die today, do you know where you will go? Heaven or hell?
 - You don't get a do-over. If you get to The Judgement Seat, and find out you are not saved, it will be too late. You need to settle this matter today.
- But today we are going to deal with another important question:
 - **Once you are saved, can you lose your salvation?**
 - Can a genuine born-again, regenerated Christian, apostatize, or walk away from God to the point that they lose their salvation?

Eternal Security

- There are many Christians that believe in a doctrine called Eternal security or once saved always saved.
- They believe that once a person is genuinely saved by God, they can never lose their salvation or forfeit their eternal life.
- Salvation is an act of God, not humans and Christ's sacrifice completely covers past, present, and future sins.
- God eternally holds and seals the believer.
- If someone "falls away" or rejects the faith later in life, they believe they were never truly born again or regenerated by God in the first place.

Conditional Security

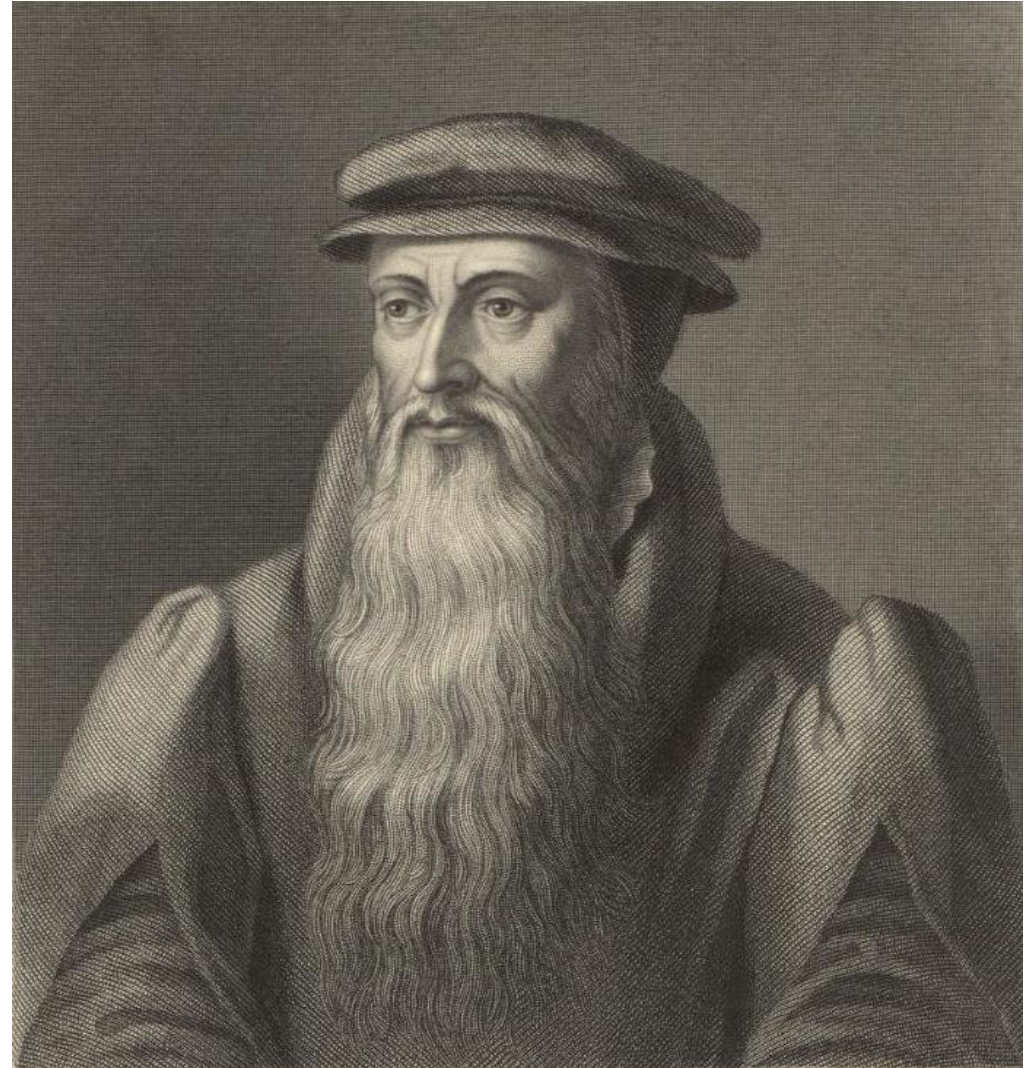
- There are also many Christians that believe a genuine, true believer can choose to turn away from God, reject Christ, and ultimately lose their salvation.
- Salvation is not just a one-time deal, but rather it requires an ongoing, active relationship of faith. Humans possess free will and can choose to walk away from God's grace, commit willful apostasy, or persist in unrepentant rebellion.
- There are several New Testament warnings that caution believers against falling away or abandoning Christ.
- Proponents of this doctrine believe these warnings would be meaningless if falling away were impossible.

Major denominations that believe in “Eternal Security”

- **Baptist**
 - Southern Baptist
 - Independent Baptist
 - Reformed Baptist
- **Presbyterians**
- **Reformed Theology**
- **Some non-denominational**

They believe in “Once saved, always saved” or the perseverance of the Saints.

You cannot lose your salvation



You cannot lose your salvation



You cannot lose your salvation



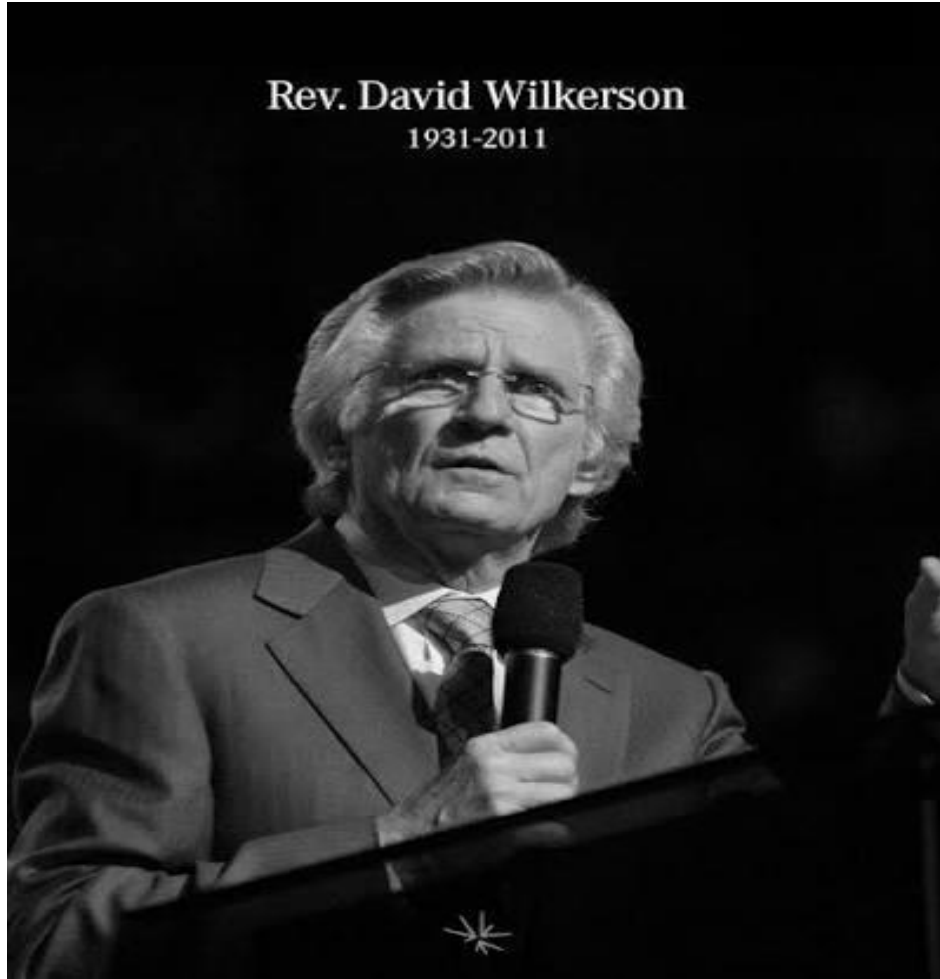
Major denominations that believe you can lose your salvation

- **Pentecostals**
- **Charismatics**
- **Assemblies of God**
- **Methodist**
- **Lutherans**
- **Episcopal**
- **Church of Christ**
- **Catholics**
- **Some non-denominational**

You can lose your salvation



You can lose your salvation



There are two sides to this argument

Once saved always saved

- Having this assurance can cause great peace of mind.
- However, if taken to the extreme, it can cause a believer to live an ungodly lifestyle, thinking they have no need to deal with sins, everything is ok.
- Some call this cheap grace or they think they have a license to sin.
- I was raised in a Southern Baptist Church that believed this way for 19 years.

You can lose your salvation

- This healthy fear of the Lord can keep someone from backsliding.
- The problem with this doctrine if taken to the extreme, is that people feel they are saved today and lost tomorrow.
- Every time they sin, they begin to doubt whether-or-not they are saved or not. This can cause great anxiety, guilt, shame and condemnation.
- I went to a Pentecostal Church that believed this way for many years.

Most churches are out of balance

Cheap Grace

These churches teach grace.

You cannot lose your salvation.

Once saved, always saved.

The God that saves will keep you.

It's as if you have a license to sin.

No condemnation, no guilt.

This can produce a carnal Christian.

You have no real conviction of sin anymore.

These churches stress the love of God and do not talk much about His judgment.

Legalistic

These churches teach holiness.

You can lose your salvation.

You can back-slide or apostatize.

You were saved last week, but now you have sinned again, and you are not sure.

You think your salvation has to do with your performance.

You feel condemned and guilty.

The harder you try, the more difficult it becomes to live holy.

You live as if you are on probation.

These churches stress the holiness and judgment of God not and do not talk much about His love and grace.

The two extreme views

You are eternally secure

- I believe the doctrine of “Once saved always saved,” has caused a lot of people to think they are saved even though they live ungodly or wicked lives.
- They may be walking totally away from God, but because they got saved at 10 years old, they think everything is ok.
- This has caused a lot of people that thought they were saved while living on the earth to die and to go to hell.

You can lose your salvation

- I believe that the doctrine of conditional security, has caused many people to live under guilt, condemnation and shame, which produces great anxiety and fear.
- They thought they were saved yesterday, but now after another sin, they have doubts whether they are saved or not.
- This causes people to be performance based and doubt God’s love, forgiveness and grace.

Why is there confusion?

- Many things are not easy to understand in the Bible.
- God hides Himself from the wise and prudent and reveals Himself to babes. Jesus spoke in parables because he wanted His disciples to understand but He didn't want the Pharisees (the religious crowd) to understand.
- People like to believe whatever they want to believe, then they try to use the Bible to prove their point, instead of fasting, praying, and studying the Word of God, while asking God for His true revelation.
- **Rule #1 is that God's Word never contradicts itself.** God's Word is true, infallible, inerrant, eternal, perfect, holy, pure, immovable, inspired and authored by God Himself.
- It is up to us to study, pray and lean upon the Holy Spirit for the correct interpretation and revelation.
- This is why it is so important who you listen to. There are many false teachers in the world today. Wolves in sheep's clothing.

Always look for the healthy balance

A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight. ***Proverbs 11:1 KJV***

- Like so many things of and about God, we should try to find the healthy balance.
- For example: Jesus is full of **Grace** and **Truth**.
- God has two equal sides of **Love** and **Judgement**.
- Yes, we have a **free will**, but God is **sovereign**.
- If you lose your balance on any of these, you will mess up.

My position

I believe we can have an amazing assurance of our salvation. The same God that saved us will keep us until the end. Nothing can separate us from God's love. We are saved, sealed and predestined. But at the same time, I do have a free will, and I know that if I wanted to, if I chose to, I could walk away from God at any time. I could apostatize. I could turn my back on God.

Let's dig in and look at the scriptures on both sides of the argument, so you can ask the Holy Spirit what you should believe. Try to be open minded and see if you can learn something today.

Eternal security

- The Southern Baptist teach “once saved always saved”.
- The Presbyterians or Calvinist teach “The Perseverance of the Saints”.
- The truly saved cannot fall away or cannot lose their salvation.
- Salvation is fundamentally God’s work from the beginning to the end.
- Those truly regenerated by God will certainly persevere because God preserves them.
- Our assurance rest in what Christ has done for us, not in our performance or what we do.

Nobody can snatch you out of God's hand

This is their #1 go to verse:

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 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. ***John 10:27-29 NKJV***

- We should have an assurance that God can and will keep us. No man or no devil can snatch us away from God.
- **You don't hold on to God; He holds on to you.**

They were never saved

- This group believes that the people that fall away, were never saved.
- **Matthew 7**, He says, “Depart from me, I never knew you”. Not that I once knew you and you lost it.
- They believe that Judas was never saved.
- If someone falls away, he was never saved. They use this verse to prove this point.

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. ***1 John 2:19 NKJV***

Nothing can separate us from God's love

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 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. ***Romans 8:38-39 NKJV***

- That's a complete list.
- Nothing can separate us from God's love.
- This is amazing! We should shout over this truth.

Perseverance

Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ; ***Philppians 1:6 NKJV***

- God will complete what He started in us.
- Not might complete it, **He will complete it.**
- The same God that saved me will keep me, and finish what He started in me.

All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. ***John 6:37 NKJV***

Predestination

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. ***Romans 8:29-30 NKJV***

- Your destiny is predetermined.
- How can anything be more-sure than what is predestined?
- What if a child wasn't sure if he was still a member of the family every time he disobeyed?
- No, of course not. When a child disobeys, the parent will correct or discipline him, but not kick him out of the family.

In Christ

Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. ***II Corinthians 5:17***
NKJV

- Noah's ark is a picture of our salvation. God didn't tell them to hold on to some pegs on the outside of the ark. If you can hold on through the entire storm, and you will be saved.
- No, God brought them inside of the ark, then God shut the door.
- I am in Christ, so I cannot sink unless Jesus sinks.
- Noah could fall-down inside the ark, but he couldn't fall out of the ark.

Sealed

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, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. ***Ephesians 1:13-14 NKJV***

- Once you get saved, God seals you, so you can never get unsaved.
- If eternal life can come to an end, then it was never eternal life.

Why haven't you?

- **This is perhaps their best argument:**
- If it was possible for you to lose your salvation, **you would.**
- If you could lose your salvation, **why haven't you?**
- How arrogant does some one have to be to think they could lose it, but they have not.
- Do you think because you are such a good person you cannot lose your salvation?
- **Do you think it depends upon your performance?**
- This should cause everyone in the building today to pause and think.

Conditional security

- Now let's look at the other side of the debate.
- A big portion of Christianity believes that a Christian can lose their salvation.
- You can back-slide; or turn away from God. You can apostatize.
- God gives us a free will. You can always choose to walk away.
- There are many scriptures addressed to believers that warn of the danger of apostacy leading to destruction.
- Why would God put these scriptures in the Bible if it were not possible?

If they fall away

For *it is impossible* for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, **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. ***Hebrews 6:4-6 NKJV***

This list sounds like true believers to me.

- Once enlightened.
- Tasted the heavenly gift.
- Shared in the Holy Spirit.
- Tasted the goodness of God's Word.

If we sin willfully after we know the truth

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on *the testimony of* two or three witnesses. 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? **Hebrews 10:26-29 NKJV**

Get tangled up and enslaved by sin again

And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before. It would be better if they had never known the way to righteousness than to know it and then reject the command they were given to live a holy life. They prove the truth of this proverb: A dog returns to its vomit. And another says, A washed pig returns to the mud. ***// Peter 2:20-22 NLT***

This could be their strongest argument.

He is cast out

If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

John 15:6 NKJV

Wild olive tree.

Notice how God is both kind and severe. He is severe toward those who disobeyed, but kind to you if you continue to trust in his kindness. But if you stop trusting, you also will be **cut off**. ***Romans 11:22 NLT***

Demas - Paul's trusted co-worker

Luke the beloved physician and **Demas** greet you. Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and the church that *is* in his house.
Colossians 4:14-15 NKJV

Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you his greetings. So do Mark, Aristarchus, **Demas**, and Luke, my co-workers. ***Philemon 23-24 NLT***

He forsook Paul.

Be diligent to come to me quickly; for **Demas** has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica. ***II Timothy 4:9-10 NKJV***

Francis Chan

If you look at the warnings in Scripture, they are terrifying. For someone to say, Hey, I prayed a prayer when I was ten, so I can live like the devil now and still go to heaven—that is not the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If your life hasn't changed, you need to examine if you were ever truly saved, because a true faith endures.



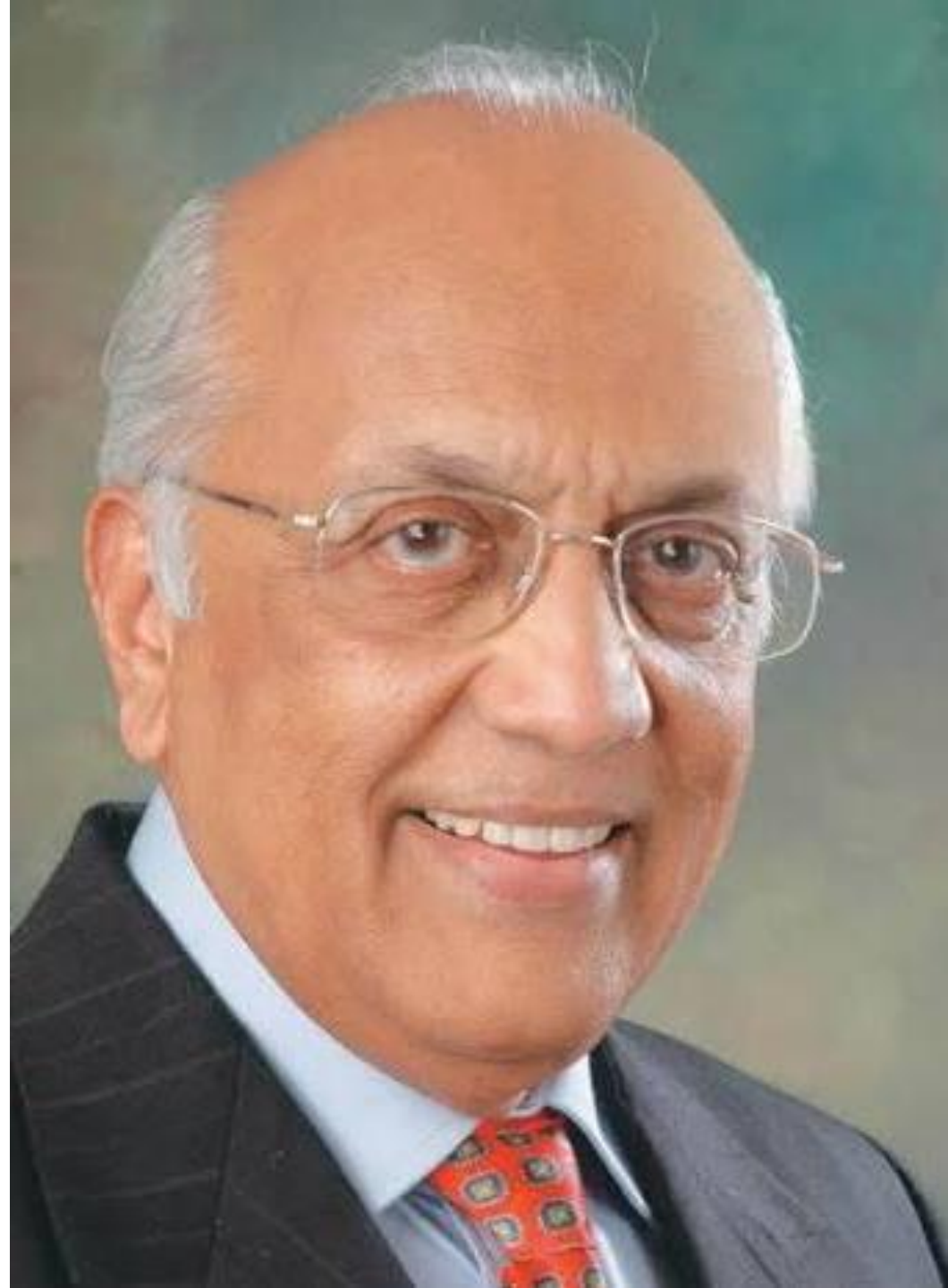
I fear, I myself should be a castaway

Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified. **I Corinthians 9:24-27 NLT**

I myself should be a **castaway**. **I Corinthians 9:27 KJV**

Zac Poonen

The devil's first lie to humanity was, You shall not surely die. The modern version of that lie taught in many churches is, Once you are saved, you can never lose your salvation, no matter how much you sin. It produces a false comfort that leads people straight to hell.



If we are faithful to the end

Be careful then, dear brothers and sisters. Make sure that your own hearts are not evil and unbelieving, turning you away from the living God. You must warn each other every day, while it is still today, so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God. **For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ.** *Hebrews 3:12-14 NLT*

But he who endures to the end shall be saved. *Matthew 24:13*

You can fall from grace.

You have become estranged from Christ, you who *attempt to be* justified by law; you have fallen from grace. *Galatians 5:4 NKJV*

Find the balance

- From this teaching today, I hope you have not simply entrenched yourself further into what you previously believed.
- Sometimes people get happy when I read scriptures that support their position and they get uncomfortable when I read the scriptures that support the other side of the argument.
- You are missing my entire point.
- You should be trying to see both sides, so you can develop a more balanced view.
- Like the sermon on grace and truth. Most churches are out-of-balance. We all need to try to find the balance.

Conclusion

- I do not think any man or even Satan can snatch me out of my Father's hand.
- I do believe the same God that saved me, is the same God that will keep me.
- I am convinced that nothing can separate me from God's love.
- I am not worried about losing my salvation. I have the blessed assurance that I am saved and sealed and predestined. This gives me great peace of mind.
- **But at the same time, I realize that I have a free will, and I know that if I wanted to, if I chose to, I could walk away from God at any time. I could apostatize. I could turn my back on God.**
- I am not talking about stumbling or falling occasionally. We all do that.
- I am saying that God gives us free will, and we all have the choice as to how we are going to finish our race. He who endures until the end shall be saved.
- As for me and my house, I choose the Lord.

My testimony

- In my 40 years of being a Christian I have gone through a lot.
- I spent most of those years going to church and trying my best to live for Christ.
- But some years ago, I went through a great trial.
- I got angry at God and I back-slid, I rebelled.
- I was angry at, deceived by and disappointed in, several pastors.
- I stopped going to church. I have been church hurt.
- I got so mad at God, I said, I would never go to church again.
- I even at one time stopped reading my Bible.
- But God never left me nor forsook me. His Spirit never left my Spirit.
- God was merciful to me. He kept me. He preserved me.
- One day His love miraculously awakened in my heart again.
- As soon as I took one step back toward Him, He ran to meet me.
- He not only forgave me, but He restored and rebuilt the ruins of my life.

Make a choice

- If you have never been saved. You need to know that your sin has separated you from God, and Jesus died on a cross to reconcile you back to God. If you call on the name of Jesus to save you, He will.
- Maybe you are here today, and you are not even sure if you have ever been saved or not. Today is the day to make sure. Today is the day of your salvation.
- Maybe you have been running from God. You could have been saved as a child, but you have been a long way off from God for years. Today, God is drawing you back to Himself. Today is the day that you should come and renew your relationship with God.
- Maybe you are simply back-slidden. You once knew the Lord, but today you find yourself in a mess. You know you should go back to God, but you have been putting that off for a long time. Today is the day that the Lord is calling you home.