



1. What (so-called) biblically-based, Evangelical churches (and Christians) believe and teach = The false doctrines of Eternal Security, Perseverance of the Saints or "Once Saved, Always Saved": Those who are truly saved (the elect), can/will never lose their salvation.

2. What Moses, Jesus, Paul, the author of Hebrews, Peter, James, Jude and John believed and taught = Legitimately saved people or true Christians can (and will) lose their salvation if they do not continue in faith and faithful obedience.

[DISCUSSED] (Deu 29:18-20, 32:5; Mat 6:14-15, 8:11-12; Rom 11:17-22; 1Co 9:24-10:12; Gal 5:4; Phi 2:12-16; Col 1:21-23; 1Th 1:4 w/3:1-5; 1Ti 1:18-20; Heb 6:4-9, 10:19-30; Jam 5:19-20; 2Pe 2:20-21; Jud 1:3-5; Rev 3:5, 22:19; Additional passages to consider: Psa 50:14-23, 51:11-12; Eze 33:13; Amo 5:21-27; Mat 25:24-27; Luk 19:24-26; Gal 5:16-21; Eph 5:1-10; Heb 3:12-4:11; Jam 2:14-26; 2Pe 3:14-17; 2Jo 1:8)

3. Why (so-called) biblically-based, Evangelical churches (and Christians) believe and teach that you cannot lose your salvation= 1) (the primary reason as demonstrated by the first answer given by many - if not most lay Evangelicals and some pastors) B/C it is the belief that gives them the most comfort – especially to those living in disobedience to God¹. 2) (the second reason is often driven by their commitment to the first ["what a fool believes, he sees" – Michael McDonald]) B/C they erroneously think that the bible teaches: **The Godhead does it all – including Christ covering it all, which means all that God gives to us in salvation is irreversible.**

3.1. The Godhead does it all...

From beginning to end, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit (i.e. the Trinity) are the only ones working to secure the conditions of our salvation. The Godhead is the only truly responsible party – or the only ones with real obligations, in relation to our salvation. Salvation is all of God or all of grace – we contribute nothing. Which means that those verses that seem to communicate loss of salvation are really about false Christians who never actually possessed it in the first place - since if they did, the work of the Godhead guarantees it will remain. This view is sometimes referred to as "monergism" (one working) (e.g. Monergism.com). And though the verses used to support this view do teach that our salvation is the result of the Godhead's gracious work, none of those passages negate – or are the same as saying, that we are not responsible for contributing anything to our salvation – or that the Godhead is the only responsible party in our salvation. **CONSIDER:**

3.1.1-3.1.3. The surrounding context of many of those passages/verses clearly reveal that God's promises are contingent upon our continued faith and/or faithfulness. In other words, we too have work to do². Hence the reason the all the commands in Scripture are directed at us (not God). The same could be said about the warning passages in Scripture. Why warn us unless the responsibility to avoid such danger lies with us? [DISCUSSED]

3.1.4. Those passages which seem to teach faith/faithfulness as gifts of God, or something that He alone produces for us - or that His work in salvation is immutable, are equally diffused:

3.1.4.1. As it re: to faith and faithfulness as gifts/something God alone produces in the saved. [DISCUSSED]

Additional consideration in re: to (Eze 36:25-28) = The word translated "cause" in the ESV is better translated "prepare" (e.g. Gen 18:7; 1Sa 25:18; 1Ki 18:23). As a matter of fact, there is nowhere this Hebrew word is ever translated that way in the OT. So why here? As such, it does not teach that God will do the work of faith and faithfulness for us (or guarantee that such work w/b done), but rather that by his "Spirit", we w/b empowered w/everything we need to successfully accomplish our responsibility/obligation (See 2Pe 1:3; Deu 30:11 has become a superlative!). This interpretation is confirmed by explanation given to this prophecy earlier in the book (11:19-20 – "that they *may* walk in my statutes" NOT "will walk..." = It is teaching empowerment not causation).

3.1.4.2. As it re: to God's work in salvation being immutable

(Mat 7:23) = Jesus' words – "I never knew you" are marital in nature. They refer to the act of intimacy associated w/marriage that consummates the covenant initially established at betrothal (e.g. Gen 4:1 – "Adam knew his wife"; 2Co 11:1-2). Because these individuals were not faithful during this testing period, Jesus refuses such consummation. Their betrothal is instead ending in (eternal) divorce (e.g. Isa 50:1; Rev 5:1-7). Jesus' words are therefore not a reference to false Christians, but rather true Christians who - because of their life of unfaithfulness (they were "workers of lawlessness"), lost their salvation or marriage covenant w/Him and the promise of eternal bliss in heaven.

¹ Here is a typical Evangelical response to the question, Do you believe the Bible teaches you can lose your salvation? "I would never believe that I could lose my salvation. To do so would rob me of one of my greatest comforts in life. It doesn't matter what anyone says or thinks they can prove from Scripture. I choose to believe that Christ will never let me go. I am permanently His and He is permanently mine. All those who would attempt to steal my joy be damned!" Notice that Scripture is not only sacrificed to protect personal comfort, but anyone (including God!) who would attempt to convince them otherwise is condemned ("All those who would attempt to steal my joy be damned!").

² Upon hearing the word "work", Evangelicals think of earning one's way to salvation since for them there are only two possible options: 1) you earn your way to heaven (the impossible option), or 2) God (or more specifically Jesus) earns it for you. Neither however is communicated in the Bible. The gospel is (and always has been) a marriage – or a system of gain (by symbolic faith) and maintain (through law faithfulness). The word "work" is therefore meant to refer to labor for the purpose of maintenance not merit.

(Rom 11:29) = These verses simply refer to God's promise to the "forefathers" (Abe/Isaac/Jacob) to never completely cut off the Jewish people or stop calling them to Himself. They will instead always be the elect (vv25-28). This passage is therefore not communicating that God's personal call or election of an individual is "irrevocable" – i.e. cannot be rejected or received in vain due to future rebellion. The Jewish people have already proven this true many times over³.

(Joh 6:37-39 w/44) = The Jews identified as "drawn" by the Father and coming to Jesus (v44) as those He "will never cast out" or "lose" but "raise up on the last day" are - according to verse 45, only those who have been "taught by God"; those who have "heard and learned from the Father" (v45). IOW: they are only those Jews (or people) who are living in faithful submission/teachableness to Him. So then, even though these Jews had the beginning work of God in salvation (they were His elect people – v31 – "our fathers" = The Patriarchs, see again Rom 11:28), they still needed to be faithful if they were going to get to heaven – i.e. never be cast out or lost, but raised up on the last day (Joh 8:31). Choosing to view verses 37-39 as an immutable promise not only fails to deal w/this important qualifier (in verse 45), but also Jesus' reference to Judas in verse 70 ("Did I not choose you, the Twelve? And yet one of you is a devil"). Judas was among the elect/chosen of God, had come to Jesus –and yet betrayed Jesus. If what Jesus meant in the prior verses by "whoever comes to Me I will never cast out" is unconditional --i.e. not affected by the actions/decisions of the person coming to Him, and salvation is indeed immutable, then Jesus lied since Judas went to Hell!

(Rom 8:31-39) = These verses only promise God's protection from foreign or external threats. They say nothing about what will happen if we prove unfaithful. Paul addresses that issue in his second epistle to Timothy and the conclusion is far from favorable in respect to our standing w/God.

(Eph 1:3-5, 7-14, 18) = Taken together, these verses seem to communicate that the Ephesians' salvation was immutable not only b/c they are "adopted" (v5), "sealed w/the promised Holy Spirit" (v13) and "enlightened"(v18) but also b/c God "chose (them) in (Christ) before the foundation of the world" (v4). Yet Paul warns these same people that listening to the "empty words" of false teachers and continuing in sin will mean not getting to heaven (5:1-6). The writer of Hebrews uses similar language to warn those in danger of apostasy (See Heb 3:12-13). Scripture also makes mention of those once adopted as no longer God's children due to their unfaithfulness (Deu 32:5 w/Eph 1:5). What therefore Paul is referring to when speaking about God's election in Christ prior to Creation itself, is not some eternal decree as to who will be in heaven, but rather that God had decided in eternity past to extend the means of salvation to sinful humanity ("us") before our egregious fall into rebellion.

(Phi 1:6) = The verses surrounding this statement are all about Paul's affection and appreciation for the Philippian believers (3-5, 7-8). Additionally, Paul mentions that he is convinced he will soon be re-united w/them for the purpose of their progress in the faith (see v25). As such, it sb obvious that who Paul is referring to as completing the "good work" is not God, but himself. Speaking about oneself in the third person is a literary device used several places in the NT – including by Paul in his other letters (Mat 8:20; 2Co 12:2-7; Col 1:28). Additionally it sb mentioned that verse 7 makes no sense unless it is himself that Paul is referring to (7 – "It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart" = Paul's feelings for the Philippian believers are not a legitimate reason to establish God's obligation to them - only his own).

(2Ti 2:10-13) = Paul's conclusion from the previous verses (signaled by the word "Therefore" in verse 10) is that one must "endure" ("I endure everything") to "obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus". This principle (or "saying") – i.e. we must persevere/endure to be saved, "is trustworthy" (according to Paul) since it agrees with another saying – or set of couplets, that were most likely familiar/common to Christians in his day, those found in verses 11-13. The purpose (then) of these couplets is to reinforce this principle/truth: it is the responsibility/obligation of every Christian to persevere/endure to be saved. The first couplet does so positively ("if we die...if we endure" = "we live...we reign"), the second – negatively (or by way of antithesis) ("if we deny...if we are faithless = "He will deny...He remains faithful"). As such, what is meant by "He remains faithful" is that God will be faithful/true to His promise as to what will happen if we are unfaithful ("he will" - once more, "deny us") (See Mat 10:22, also again Mat 7:23).

(1Jo 2:19) = The fact that John states "they went out from us" means that these people were (at one time) a part of the covenant community (the place they "went out from") and therefore saved individuals. It is their going - or being put out of the covenant community, that reveals (or makes "plain") "they all are" or "were" "not of us" anymore (i.e. no longer – like the rest in the covenant community, willing to "continue" in faithfulness to Christ), but instead choosing to stand against - or in disobedience, to Christ. They had become "antichrists" (18). John's words are therefore referring to the apostasy of real Christians.

³ Though the Jewish people have always been God's elect (Deu 14:2) they - in large part, have rejected God. Consider Jesus' teaching on this in: 1) (Mat 22:1-14) = The Jews are among the original "invited" guests in this story. As such, they represent the called (or elect) who reject such election and therefore are not be among those "chosen" to go to heaven ("many are called, few are chosen"); 2) (Luk 7:28-30) = These Jews reject their "purpose" as God's elect.