



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.

"The bottom line in this doctrine is that when the Lord saves someone, that salvation is forever, never to be reversed. The Bible is clear on that basic truth and the basic truth is that salvation by its very nature is irrevocable." – John MacArthur

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 = B/C they erroneously believe that in relation to salvation 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...

3.1.1. 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) Versus used to support their position (Eze 36:25-28; Mat 7:23; Joh 3:21, 6:37-39, 10:27-29; Act 13:48, 16:14; Rom 8:29-30, 31-39, 11:6, 29; 1Co 1:26-31; 2Co 5:18-19; Eph 1:3-5, 7-14, 18, 2:8-10; Phi 1:6, 2:12-13; Col 1:20-22; 2Ti 2:11-13; Tit 3:5; 1Pe 1:1-4; 2Pe 1-4; 1Jo 2:19; Jud 24; Rev 21:6). Though these verses teach that our salvation is due to 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:

3.1.1.1. A closer look at the surrounding context of many of those passages used by the Eternal Security camp, make it clear that the promises made are contingent upon continued faith and/or faithfulness on our part. In other words, we too have work to do¹ (Rom 8:29-30 w/28) = Those God has "predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son", "justified" and "glorified" (a statement referring to present fellowship w/the Godhead - not future transformation in heaven – Joh 17:22; Eph 2:6), are only those who "love (or are faithful to) God"; (Rom 11:6 w/11:17-22); (Phi 2:12-13 w/14-16) = According to Paul what needs to still be worked "out" in their salvation is their obedience/faithfulness according to the examples given in verse 14-16a. This is especially important given that this was why God worked in them His salvation in the first place. It was so that they would "will and work for his good pleasure". That such working out was their responsibility – as well as a condition of their salvation, is made apparent by Paul's concern to have "run or labor(ed) in vain." If God was the only One working, then no such concern would exist; (Col 1:20-22 w/23; 2Co 5:18-19 w/20-6:1); (Tit 3:5 w/8, 14 w/Mat 8:18-23 w/Luk 13:1-9 w/Joh 15:2); (1Pe 1:1-4 w/5) = Notice, we are "guarded" thru "faith" or "faithfulness" – i.e. this is the contingency of our protection; (2Pe 1:1-4 w/5-11); (Jud 24 w/20-21) = Our responsibility/obligation to faithfulness precedes [or is the prerequisite] to God's help/protection in keeping us from "stumbling"; (Rev 21:6 w/7).

3.1.1.2. That such faith and faithfulness is our obligation/responsibility (and not something God does for us) is also made clear by the fact that all the commands in Scripture are directed at us. In other words, we (not God) are the ones being told to exercise and continue to exercise faith and faithfulness (e.g. Rom 8:12-13; 1Th 4:1; again 2Pe 1:5).

3.1.1.3. The warning passages associated with unbelief or unfaithfulness further demonstrate these things to be our obligation/responsibility and a condition of the salvation (e.g. Heb 10:26-31; Gal 5:19-21; 1Pe 1:14-19, 4:15-18; 2Co 5:9-11).

3.1.1.4. Again, when vetted by their surrounding context - or the witness of Scripture as a whole, those passages which seem to teach faith and faithfulness as gifts of God, something that He alone produces for us, or that God's work in salvation is immutable, are defused:

3.1.1.4.1. As it re: to faith and faithfulness as gifts/something God alone produces in the saved.

(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 will be done), but rather that by his "Spirit", we will be empowered w/everything we need to successfully accomplish our responsibility/obligation (See 2Pe 1:3; Deu 30:11 has become a superlative!).

(Joh 3:21) = The works of the person who "comes to the light" have been carried out *in* God (His name) – not *by* God (His doing).

(Act 13:48 and 16:14) = These passages teach only that God's work (in calling to salvation and opening the heart) were received, not that God does the work of faith or faithfulness. Such conclusions demonstrate poor logic (e.g. Jim invited and influenced John to be a part of the football team ≠ Jim accepted the offer and played John's position on the team; Correlation ≠ Causation).

(1Co 1:26-31 and Eph 2:9 w/12) = We are to boast in the Lord not b/c He is the only One doing the work in our salvation, but b/c of His mercy in extending the offer of salvation to us - the unwise, ignoble, weak, Gentile people of the world, those who for a long time were "strangers of the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."

(Eph 2:8-10 w/11-12) = Salvation is the gracious "gift" [not faith] extended to those once without such grace, "God" or "hope". And such faith comes before (not after) regeneration (the view of many in the Evangelical camp).

¹ 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.

According to Paul, to be “made alive” (i.e. regenerated) is to be “saved by grace” (verse 5) which happens “through (or by) faith” (verse 8). Faith therefore precedes regeneration and is not the work of God.

3.1.1.4.2. As it re: to God’s work in salvation being immutable²

(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 to eternally be associated w/such individuals or consummate the marriage/betrothal covenant established at the time of salvation. Jesus words are essentially His call for (eternal) divorce. Jesus words are therefore not a reference to them lacking prior salvation, but rather - b/c of their life of unfaithfulness (they were “workers of lawlessness”), their prior betrothal to Him (as saved individuals) was not – nor would be, consummated in the intimate and eternal bliss of heaven.

(Joh 6:37-39 w/44-45) = The Jews identified as “drawn” by the Father and coming to Jesus as those He will never “cast out” but “raise up on the last day” are only those who are “taught by God”; those who have “heard and learned from the Father” - i.e. those who are in faithful submission to Him. So then, even though these individuals had the beginning work of God in salvation (they were His elect people – v31), they still needed to be faithful if they were going to get to heaven. Choosing to view verses 37-39 as an immutable promise not only fails to deal w/the important qualifier found in verses 44-45, 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, then Jesus lied since Judas went to Hell!

(Joh 10:27-29)

(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.

(Rom 11:29)

(Eph 1:3-5, 7-14, 18 w/5:1-6) = 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.” 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 describe those able to go apostate (See Heb 6:4-6). Additionally, God speaks of those once adopted as no longer His 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 w/35, 7-8) = 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 2:11-13 w/10) = Paul’s conclusion from the previous verses (signaled by the word “Therefore” in verse 10) is that one must “endure” 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 that it is the responsibility/obligation of the 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”).

(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.

3.1.2. If we are responsible for anything in relation to our salvation, then salvation *cannot* be monergistic. It is instead synergistic (us cooperating with God) and therefore something that can be lost by us. But it doesn’t have to be! More than anybody before us, we *can* do it (Deu 30:11 w/Eze 36:27).

“If salvation depended on our ability...(then) we (could and) would lose our salvation.” – John MacArthur

CLOSING CONTEMPLATION (in re: to the faulty logic behind: “we didn’t do anything to get in; we can’t therefore do anything to get out.”): The example of a doctor who saves you from death by heart attack. Though the only reason you are still here begins with him, following his strict prescription after such emergency deliverance is what determines whether you keep living in the future. The

² Many other passages (than just those mentioned in this study) bear witness to the fact that God’s election is not immutable since those elected can reject it. This unfortunately has been the plight of the majority of the Jews. They are God’s elect people (Deu 14:2) yet in large part have rejected God’s work in this respect. 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; 3) (Joh 8:30-36) = Jesus acknowledges these Jews to be the elect – or “offspring of Abraham”, yet establishes their responsibility to faithfulness (“If you abide in my word, then you are truly my disciples”). Notice the command – or condition is directed at those who had “believed in Him” (“So Jesus said to those disciples who...”). If God is responsible for such abiding or faithfulness, then why is the command – or condition directed at these individuals? That this condition (abiding in Jesus’ words – or faithfulness) was their responsibility is further emphasized by the fact that it is also the pre-requisite to Jesus continued salvific work among them. They must “abide” not only to be true disciples, but also to secure the “truth” or the work of Jesus in setting them “free” from the slavery and condemnation associated w/sin (“If you abide in my word...you will now the truth... and the truth [or “Son” – v36] will set you free”).

same is true as it relates to our salvation (we too must follow the strict prescription given at the time we were saved if we want the eternal life it promises).