

The Salvation of the Soul

The salvation of the soul is related to both initial and final salvation. **Initial salvation occurs when a person humbly *repents* and extends a trusting-submitting faith in Jesus Christ for his personal salvation and thereby instantly receives *eternal life*** (Lk. 9:23; Gal. 5:24; 1Jn. 5:12). At this same moment in time he also passes from spiritual death to life, from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to the power of God (Jn. 5:24; Acts 26:18; 1 Jn. 3:14), that is, he gets *born again* (Jn. 3:3,5,7).

Such a person is also **set free from his slavery of sin** (Jn. 8:32-36; Rom. 6:22) and **finds rest for his soul through the Lord Jesus Christ** (Mt. 11:28,29). As a recipient of eternal life he has also been declared *righteous* in God's sight and made a son of God because of his submissive faith in Christ (Rom. 3:22; Gal. 3:26; 5:24; Eph. 5:24a).

Final salvation simply refers to *entering* the kingdom of God, which only occurs for those who die physically in a *righteous* state or are in such a spiritual state when the Lord returns (Mt. 5:8; 7:21; 25:46; etc.).

At this very moment, the Christian (one who is following the Lord Jesus) is somewhere between his past conversion experience and his future entrance into the kingdom, that is, assuming he *endures to the end* (Mt. 10:22), to the point of death (Rev. 2:10) and holds firmly till the end (Heb. 3:14). Though he now possesses eternal life, he is also on the road that leads to [eternal] life (Mt. 7:14 cf. Mt. 25:46) with the possibility of wandering off (1 Tim. 6:10,21; 2 Tim. 2:18; 2 Pet. 2:15), turning back (Jn. 6:66; 1 Tim. 5:15), falling away (Lk. 8:13; Mt. 11:6; 26:31), etc. Sadly, turning away from the Lord is somewhat commonplace (Mt. 24:10; 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:4). If you are a true Christian that horrible thing -- ***dying spiritually*** (Rom. 8:13; Lk. 15:24; etc.) -- could happen to you also, unless you do certain things to prevent it (Lk. 13:23,24; 1 Tim. 5:22b; Rev. 3:11).

If our perseverance in the faith was solely left up to God, no Christian in the past would have ever shipwrecked his faith in Christ or apostatized for any reason, since God always does everything perfectly and does not desire for anyone to perish (2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:4). Your free will and human responsibilities regarding the things of God are vital and will determine much more than your rewards and position in the kingdom. God's grace can be refused, resisted, ignored, neglected, etc. (John 5:40; Acts 7:51; Heb. 2:3; James 5:19,20; etc.). Regarding ***salvation***, Paul's grace teaching taught this about reaping *eternal life*: "The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; **the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life**. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest **if we do not give up**" (Gal 6:8,9).

That means there absolutely is NO eternal security or once saved always saved, as so many have been *wrongly* taught. That dogma distorts the biblical term of *grace* and even the *gospel* itself (Titus 2:11,12; 1 Cor. 15:2; Col. 1:23). Jesus taught Christians: "...Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown" (Rev 3:11). Consult the book, ***The Believer's Conditional Security*** by Daniel D. Corner for much more on this subject.

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