

## Preservation of the Saints

The question of the preservation of the saints is usually a hot topic: some believe that “once a child of God, always a child of God,” others, that salvation is conditional, and that man can be lost eternally, the same way he was saved, i.e., one through obedience, the other through disobedience.

It would be, and has been described as a very comforting doctrine to be eternally saved regardless of what one does after their obedience to the gospel, but the question is, “Is it so?”

Man can debate the issue all day, using man’s wisdom. However, we are going to look at what the word of God has to say on the issue of the “Impossibility of Apostasy,” with the simple evidence that, “It is written.”

There are probably few, who believe the Bible to be the word of God, that would question the conversion of the Apostle Paul. With his conversion being a given, let’s look at what he said about his own salvation. The Apostle Paul said, “I do all things for the gospel’s sake, that I may be a joint partaker thereof” (1 Corinthians 9:23), and in the same context he said, “I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air: but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected” (Verses 26 & 27). If it were impossible for the Apostle Paul to be rejected, i.e., “Impossibility of Apostasy,” his words are of no account.

When the Apostle Paul wrote the young evangelist Timothy, he said, “But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron” (1 Timothy 4:1). It is a simple principle that one cannot “fall away from the faith” if they were never in it, and it was the Spirit that so said.

The Hebrew writer also confirms, “Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God: but exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called To-day; lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin: for we are become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end” (Hebrews 3:12-14). Once again, we have a “falling away from,” and “if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence firm unto the end.” A person cannot do either unless they first have it.

The Apostle Peter said, "For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them. It has happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog turning to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire" (2 Peter 2:20-22).

Is there such a thing as the preservation of the saints? Absolutely! Is the preservation without conditions? According to the scriptures, Absolutely not! Ross Triplett, Sr.