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Many believe and teach that once and individual is saved he cannot be lost. However, the Scriptures clearly teach that a child of God can forfeit his salvation and be eternally lost. Many passages speak of the conditional nature of our future salvation. The apostle Paul reminded the Christians in Corinth of the gospel by which they were saved "if " they held fast to the word which was preached to them (1Cor. 15:2). The word "if" places a condition on salvation for the child of God. To the children of God in Galatia Paul wrote, "And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart" (Gal. 6:9). The word "if" here implies if we as children of God do lose heart, we will not reap the reward. The writer of Hebrews declared we are of Christ's household "if we hold fast our confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. 3:6). Why do the Scriptures make these conditional statements about salvation if once we are saved, we cannot be lost?

The Scriptures point out the conditional nature of our future salvation by giving solemn warnings against apostasy (falling away as to be lost). The apostle Paul in warning the Corinthians against apostasy realized he too could fall away and be lost. He said, "But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified." (1Cor. 9:27). Certainly, if there was a possibility for the apostle Paul to be rejected, then we too could be. Right after that statement he used the example

of the Israelites who fell from God's favor by their disobedience and were not permitted to enter the promised land. Paul's conclusion was, "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1Cor. 10:12). The Hebrew writer declared, "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of if " (Heb. 4:1). These are solemn warnings against falling away and being lost. Why give the warnings if once one is saved, he is always saved?

The Scriptures also speak of examples of those who did fall away. Among some who became Christians at the preaching of Philip was a man by the name of Simon. When he later became covetous of the apostles' power, Peter told him, "Thy money perish with thee...for thy heart is not right in the sight of God...I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity" (Acts 8:12-24). Paul wrote to some who had at one time been faithful, but now had turned back to Judaism. He said, "You have become estranged from Christ...you have fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4; cf. Heb. 6:4-6)

These are but a few of the many passages where the Scriptures plainly teach that salvation is conditional based upon our faithful obedience. Only if we are faithful unto death will we receive a crown of life (Rev. 2:10).

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