



# What must I do to be “Lost”?

Life's second most important question.



**“What must I  
do to be Lost?”**

**Nada!**

**Nothing!**

**Not Anything!**

## Life's Most Important Question

His world and the jail building and his future were coming down around his ears in a great earthquake. The Christian prisoners were about to escape. The Philippian jailor asks what has become life's most important question: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The Apostles immediately answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved..." (Acts 16:31).

That simple formula of faith is repeated through the entire New Testament many times. Faith alone, by grace alone, in Christ alone which leads immediately to relationship with God, forgiveness of Sin, and eternal life. How to know God personally is certainly **life's most important question**.

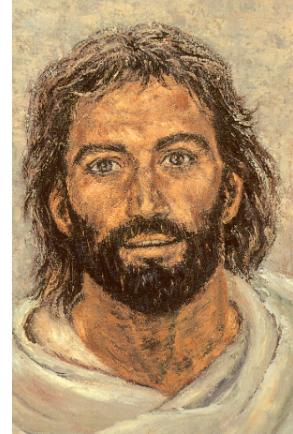
If the jailor asks **life's most important question**, then certainly life's **second most important question** is "**What must I do to be lost?**" Some in the Christian Community would say that by disbelief, or failure to believe enough, or to do enough, or to stop believing, or by "backsliding", or turning away from God, or failure to do the right thing, or by doing the wrong thing, or by some act of the "free will", or by not keeping certain commandments, or by some horrible unforgiveable sin, a person can remove himself from the eternal relationship with God which a person once thought he had.

If **life's second most important question** is valid, then we would expect that question to be addressed in the Bible, and carefully laid out, and described and clearly defined. How to leave God's forever family must be clearly explained because it really is a matter of life and death. What must I do to lose eternal salvation? Nothing can be left to chance, or opinion, or tradition, or feelings, or out of context Biblical interpretation. The answer must be as clear as the Apostles' answer to the Philippian jailor concerning obtaining eternal salvation. "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved**" (Acts 16:31).

Just as there are examples of people getting saved and having their sins forgiven and lives changed by believing, through the entire New Testament, we should also expect examples of people getting lost as well. There must be clear warnings and instructions about "**how not to get lost.**" There should be no doubt or debate concerning the issues. A person must **know** when he is no longer in God's "Forever Family" and lost. Additionally, if it is possible to lose eternal life, then there must be a very definite and understandable criteria for **getting saved again**. We should not expect God to leave His children uninformed and unsure about such an eternally important issue. Above all, what criteria must one meet in order to know he is lost and needs "resaving?"

## What did Jesus have to say?

We must look carefully at what the Savior had to say concerning the security of the believer's relationship with Himself and the Father. Then we are able to understand in context from what is clear and undisputed and what Jesus means by what He says; "My sheep hear My voice, and **I know them**, and they follow Me; and **I give eternal life** to them, and **they will never perish**; and **no one will snatch them out of My hand**. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and **no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand**. **I and the Father are one**" (John 10:27-30 NASU).



God gives seven clear reasons to trust in His secure care of the believer. An especially strong case is to be made for the unconditional and unending relationship between God and the believer. The strongest negative in the original language is found in John 10:28 when Jesus actually says that His believing sheep will "**not never**" perish. What is that we ask? The answer is "**not ever**." In all fairness to the sheep, where are the warnings and conditions of possible loss of salvation?

The Lord Jesus Christ gives six more reasons why God can be trusted to keep and protect the salvation of His own children. Listen to what he said.

**"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me**, and the one who comes to Me **I will certainly not cast out**. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of **all that He has given Me I lose nothing**, but **raise it up on the last day**. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have **eternal life**, and I Myself will **raise him up** on the last day" (John 6:37-40 NASU).

Jesus says He will lose no one, and He personally guarantees resurrection for the believer and the life He gives is eternal. If eternal life does not last forever why did Jesus call the kind of life He gives eternal? How long is eternal? Forever! We must reject the nonsense, when people say: "This life is eternal only as long as I have it."

Still, Jesus gives three more reasons to believe in God's ability and promise to keep his own children eternally safe. He said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has **eternal life**, and **does not come into judgment**, but has passed out of **death into life**" (John 5:24 NASU).

As in all the Scripture, there is no hint about conditional salvation. The believer is

given life as a gift that lasts forever and the believer will not face judgment. Why did Jesus fail to inform the believer of the temporary or conditional nature of salvation? Why in fact present eternal life as permanent and eternal, when actually it was not? Why did Jesus never warn his followers that they were in constant danger, by breaking certain rules of faith and practice, of the loss of eternal life? Why did He call salvation Eternal Life, if it really wasn't eternal? Did Jesus miss the perfect opportunity to explain the conditional nature of salvation rather than leave His followers with the impression that if they were not "once saved, always saved?" **Why leave people with false hope or no hope at all?** Why would God leave believers with the mistaken view that their salvation was secure if it really wasn't?

**The answer is simple: He said nothing because there was nothing to say.**

The believer finds his own security and assurance in the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, and finds his eternal safety as God's responsibility. There can be no truth to the teaching that "God gives us independent free will and will never hold us against our will, if we decide to walk away from Him." Jesus' promises are final and eternal, and unconditional. The Bible never says that man has autonomous free will.

## Things are not what they seem

### ***Pretend believers***

Words and actions alone do not guarantee that a person claiming to be a genuine believer was actually ever born again in the first place. These



pretenders who pose as members of the household of faith may fool many. Ultimately, they will be revealed as imposters. God is never deceived.

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, **"I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice**

**lawlessness."** (Matt 7:21-23 NASU).

There is an absolute conflict between God's reality and man's reality. We can easily make excuses for people because they are "church members", or they are religious leaders, or they make great claims for themselves, and some even

seem to have great supernatural powers, which means of course, that they must be one of God's "anointed". The believer with doctrine in his mind and who is spiritually discerning is not often deceived. Recall what Jesus says about the pretenders: "**I never knew you.**" The pretenders usually present a facade which goes largely undetected by those of the "church community." They are what kids call "posers."

### ***Christianese***

Very similar to the group above are those who, in the sense that they easily wear the mask of a Christian, speak "Christianese", and they know when to stand up and sit down, and how to pass the plate, and just when to shout "Amen!" For the undiscerning, these pretend Christians, at first look, don't appear much different than all the other Christians. But Jesus had some words to say about them.



"Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' The slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.'"" (Matt 13:24-31 NASU).

Ultimately, God will separate in the "harvest", the genuine from the "look alike". But the point is that there are false believers who are among the genuine believers which clearly and easily explains why some can claim to be genuine but their lives, in truth, don't pass the test as genuine. The Church must stop making



excuses for those for who are false, simply because they are church members. Later on, when some of these tares seem to “fall away” or their phoniness is exposed, we must not say that they lost their salvation, but recognize that some were never the genuine article to begin with.

Through the entire Old and New Testament, there are those people who are recognized as false. Their sole purpose is to corrupt the message of grace, and to give false prophecies, and to turn believers away from freedom in Christ. Some identify openly with the Community of Believers; some come in undetected; and others pretend to be what they are not. Believers are clearly warned and the standards are clearly set forth and yet there is still open toleration, acceptance, and even submission to their false message by those who are undiscerning. Ezekiel 18:20-22, Jude 4, Galatians 1:6-9, 2 Corinthians 11:13-14, 1 John 2:18-19 all contain examples of false believers. Often these individuals are recognized as "superstars" by the churches, and when they are exposed as frauds, it is said that they have "fallen from grace" and lost their salvation, and yet Scripture says their behavior is explained by the fact that they were not believers in the first place. Scripture clearly says that the false prophets, false teachers, and false brothers do not have and have never had the Spirit of God (Jude 19, NASU).

## Is your fire insurance paid?

Some would argue that the danger in believing in “once saved, always saved”, is that one may become a Christian and then do as he pleases. Or, the other possibility would be, to walk away from God, live life here on earth without restrictions, and catch up with God in Eternity. To suggest such a possibility, betrays the heart of the inquirer. The inference is by those who don’t understand the nature of grace and regeneration that, “I can do as I please because my eternal life insurance is paid.” The Apostle Paul writes, “Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (2 Cor. 5:17 NASU).

With new life in Christ comes a new heart and a new way of believing and behaving. We no longer think and do what we once did because our “want to” is changed. It is clear from 1 John 3:9 that whoever is born of God, does not make sin a **continuing practice**. In the same chapter, verse 6 plainly communicates that whoever makes a practice of sin, has never “seen Him, or known Him.” Clearly, if you are a believer, you will act like it, and if you are not a believer, you will not act like it. There are no excuses. There is not nor there can be a distinction, nor separation, between practice and precept; we do what we believe,

and we believe what we do.

## The Doctrine of the Woodshed

In earlier days, when we heated our homes with wood, the woodshed was often the place where the father would administer the rod of correction because of disobedience.



Hence the phrase, "taken to the woodshed." God has, as a loving Father, a woodshed where He disciplines His own children in order to correct, punish, and to prevent bad behavior from becoming contagious. The concept of discipline is found from Genesis to Revelation. The purpose is not to remove believers from the family of God, but to bring correction to those who misbehave. Earthly fathers do the same when it comes to the discipline of their children. The purpose is not to remove children from the family, but to correct behavior within the family. God disciplines only His own children, as Scripture

makes clear. If it seems that some believers can get away with just about anything and live however they please, and nothing seems to happen to them, then remember this: **God disciplines only His own Children.**

"You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, **"My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by him; for those whom the Lord loves he disciplines, and he scourges every son whom he receives."** It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness" (Heb 12:4-11 NASU).

Several other key texts which illustrate Divine discipline are found in the following passages: Psalm 51, Jonah 2, Acts 5:1-6, I Cor. 10:27-32, I Cor. 5:5, and 1 John 5:16-17.



## Smoke on the Coat Tails

Scripture clearly explains that all believers in Jesus will come before the Judgment Seat of Christ 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (NASU).

The judgment seat described here, also called the bema seat, is the place of reward or lack of reward for the believer, not the place of condemnation and separation for having failed in this life nor is it the place of judgment leading to eternal condemnation. As a further explanation, Paul adds further detail to this judgment. The bema seat of judgment (rewards) is used in the ancient world as the place of rewarding contestants in the games as in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15:

"According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire" (NASU).

Rewards may be gained or lost, but ultimately the believer himself survives even though he may be smelling of the smoke which burned up his useless and ineffective works while on earth. Notice very carefully: **"but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."** Salvation is not an issue at this "reward stand."

## Rebound

God has designed a method for believers to maintain fellowship with Himself when they sin in life. The eternal relationship doesn't need reestablishing, but the sweet fellowship does. Just as Jesus began to wash the disciples' feet in the upper room, Peter shouted out that he wanted a bath instead (John 13:8-10). Jesus explained a great theological truth that the one who is clean, only needs an occasional foot washing.



Thus, the believer's position in Christ is unchanged, we are "made perfect forever, by Christ's one offering" (Heb. 10:14), but down here, on earth where we

walk daily, we sin.

This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us (1 John 1:5-2:1 NASU).

By the simple act of confessing which means **to rebound immediately from the place of darkness to the place of light**, God is literally asking believers to name the sin, or to agree with Him about what you have done. In the original language of Scripture, confess means to “name it”, or to say the “same thing.” Then the believer comes back into fellowship with God. Never is there any mention in the context, that we confess in order get “resaved.” Nowhere in Scripture does an unregenerate person confess his sin to be saved. This entire passage is written to believers. Rather the lost person confesses Christ for salvation, not his sin. Please see Romans 10:9-10.

## The Missing Link



In spite of terrible and yet completely undefined and vague warnings by those who hold to the doctrine of “**eternal insecurity**”, there are **no Biblical examples of believers losing their eternal salvation**. The Bible presents no information on what one must do to be lost,”

how one knows he is lost, and what to do to get resaved. The favorite verses used by those who believe in **eternal insecurity**, though taken out of Biblical context, in actual fact teach the truth: **Once lost always lost**.

### ***The Unpardonable Sin:***

"Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come" (Matt 12:31-33, NASU).

If the passage is speaking of a believer's loss of salvation, (which it does not), the passage would teach that if salvation was lost, it can't be regained for there is **"no forgiveness in this life, nor in the life to come."** Those who commit the "unpardonable sin" in this passage, are unbelieving Jews.

### ***Falling away:***

"For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and **then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance**, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame. For



ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned. But, beloved, we are convinced of **better things concerning you, and things that accompany salvation**, though we are speaking in this way" (Heb. 6:4-9 NASU).

The passage is speaking to believers not unbelievers. If indeed the passage is teaching that salvation can be lost (which it is not teaching) it also teaches the impossibility of restoration. But in reality it is speaking of enlightened unbelievers in contrast with genuine believers.

### ***Rejection of the Blood of the Covenant:***

"For if we go on **sinning willfully** after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there **no longer remains a sacrifice for sins**, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." And again, "The Lord will judge his people."



It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God"( Heb 10:26-31, NASU).

Essentially, "light rejected brings night." The warning is clear to unbelievers that there is no alternative for salvation, other than faith in the blood of the covenant. Thus if this passage was speaking to believers, which it does not, it would say there is no more sacrifice for sin for those who walk away from relationship with God. **Once lost, always lost.** The writer is warning the Jewish covenant community, especially the unbelieving members who by heritage and association have known the truth through all their history and ignored it.

Universally in Scripture, those who reject, deny, turn away from the faith as described of those here, have never been truly repentant and regenerate believers in the first place.

## Conclusion

The Bible says that salvation is available by faith to the one who **believes**. The Bible never discusses nor explains what a person needs to do to be **lost**. Jesus says He is the **Guarantee** of man's salvation. The Bible says that **Pretenders** have come into the Church and are not well recognized as simply pretenders. Real believers are **disciplined** so that bad behavior and belief cannot continue without interruption and consequences. God provides a way for sinning Christians to be restored to fellowship with God through **confession**, but not restored to eternal relationship, which was never lost. If a believer's earthly life has been a failure, he will make it through the Bema seat judgment safely, even with **smoke on his coat tails**. The major passages used by those who believe and teach eternal insecurity, if taken out of context, teach that if a person can get lost, **he will always stay lost, and there is no further hope**. The Apostle Paul wrote "...for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day" (2 Timothy 1:12-13, NASU).

Jesus said, "...and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish..." (John 10:28, NASU).

[www.rethinkingadventism.com](http://www.rethinkingadventism.com)

