

Assurance of Salvation

1 John 5:13

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Shepherd's Community Church

Questions of Assurance

(Matthew 7:21; 13:36-43; 2 Corinthians 13:5; 1 John 4:18; Romans 8:16)

Tests of Assurance

(1 John 1:2-3; 1:7; 3:10; 1:8-10; 2:3-5; 2:15-17; 3:2-3; 3:4-13; 3:22; 4:1-3; 4:13; 2:27; 5:10-11)

Reasons for Assurance

(John 6:40; 10:27-29; Ephesians 1:13-14; Philippians 1:6; Romans 8:30, 35-39; Jude 24)

What about verses that seem to teach you can lose salvation?

➤ Galatians 5:4, "You have fallen from grace."

Paul's clear meaning in Galatians is that any attempt to be justified by the law is to reject salvation by grace alone through faith alone. Those exposed to the truth of the gospel, who then turn their backs on Christ and seek to be justified by the law are separated from Christ and lose all prospects of God's salvation. Their desertion of the gospel only proves that their faith was never genuine (cf. Luke 8:13, 14; 1 John 2:19).

➤ Hebrews 6:4-6, "Those who... have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance."

There is no mention here of these individuals being saved and they are not described with any terms that apply only to believers (such as holy, born again, righteous, or saints). These are unbelievers who had been exposed to God's redemptive truth, and perhaps made a profession of faith, but had not exercised genuine saving faith. Verse 9 makes a clear contrast, saying, "But beloved, we are convinced of better things concerning you, things that accompany salvation. This shows that the things described in 5:11-6:5 do not accompany salvation but are indicative of unbelief and apostasy.

➤ John 15:2, 6, "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away... If anyone does not abide in Me; he is thrown away... and burned."

Grammatically, the phrase "in me" in John 15:2 can be adjectival or adverbial, that is, it can either modify the word "branch" or "bear." The latter is rendered this way in the New English Translation: "He takes away every branch that does not bear fruit in me." The picture is of the vinedresser (the Father) getting rid of dead wood—those who never genuinely believed. They will be taken away in judgment. These branches do not bear fruit because there is no life in them.

➤ Hebrews 10:26-31, "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."

In verse 39, the author excludes genuine believers from this category, saying, "But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul." The Greek term for "sin willfully" carries the idea of deliberate, habitual intention. The sin is deliberately rejecting Christ. Judas Iscariot is an example of someone who had ample knowledge, but lacked faith and became apostate. The apostate is beyond salvation because he has rejected the only sacrifice that can cleanse him from sin. To turn away from that sacrifice leaves him with no saving alternative.