

**Sermon Series:** Basic Church Questions

**Sermon title:** Can I lose my salvation?

**Scripture reading:** Hebrews 3:12-14

Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church

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Every now and then, we like to take the opportunity to address some common questions in the church.

We've done this over the last few years. We asked things like, "What is Baptism", "What is the Lord's Supper", "What is a Deacon" and "What is the Church"?

I chose to do this topical message today because, as some of you have heard in the news, recently a very reputable pastor who published some excellent books that I have on my shelf, not only divorced his wife but has made a 180 degree turn spiritually and has openly said he's no longer a Christian. This isn't the first time this has happened, of course. There is nothing new under the sun. He wasn't the first and won't be the last.

But it's a wake up call. It causes us to ask some hard questions. Most certainly it has caused many to ask, "If he walked away from Jesus, maybe I could as well."

Or it may cause us to ask questions like, "Can that even happen? Can a person walk away from Jesus? Can a person lose their salvation?"

So, I'd like to address this very important question today.

I'd like to structure my sermon in this way.

I'd like to give you three facts from Scripture. I wish that I could give you all of the verses in the Bible related to the topic today but due to time I have only chosen some of them. There are many. The three facts and the outline for today is as follows:

- I. There will be some who *seem* to be born again but do not have saving faith. (Shipwreck)
- II. All who are born again, *will* persevere in the faith. (Stand firm)
- III. All who are born again are *eternally secure* in Christ. (Secure)

And then lastly I want to give us some encouragement.

Let's pray and ask for the Holy Spirit's help.

- I. There will be some who *seem* to be born again but do not have saving faith.**

We don't need to look at people in the present but we can turn to Scripture. We don't want to judge people in the present and make conclusions whether they are truly born again or not. That's not our job. But we do have some examples in the Bible.

The Bible uses some different phrases and we might add, varying degrees of people struggling or stumbling in their faith and even abandoning Christ altogether. Let me show you some of them.

- **Betrayal**- Judas
- **Doubt**- Thomas (John 20:24)
- **Denial**- Peter (John 18:15)
- **Desertion**- Demas (2 Timothy 4:10)
- **Fall away**- (Hebrews 3:12-14)
- **Fled**- All disciples (Mark 14:50)
- **Shipwrecked the faith**- Hymenaeus & Alexander (1 Timothy 1:20) blasphemed
- **Swerved from the truth**- Hymenaeus & Philetus (2 Timothy 2:17-18)
- **Turned back**- many disciples (John 6:66)
- **Turned away**- Phygelus & Hermogenes (2 Timothy 1:15)
- **Withdrawn and came back**- Mark (Acts 15:38)

So, this isn't something new.

In the parable of the sower Jesus told us this. Some seeds fall along the path and they hear but the word never takes root. Some seeds fall on rocky ground and there is joy in their lives. They endure for a while but when tribulation or persecution comes they fall away. Some seeds fall among the thorns but they never bear fruit because like Demas, they love the world and money and they don't bear fruit. And some seeds fall on good soil and the seeds bear fruit.

From the very beginning of Jesus's preaching ministry there have always been some who seem to love Christ, some who cry out 'Hosanna Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'....and later cry out, "Crucify him. Crucify him."

There will be some who *seem* to be born again but do not have saving faith.

## **II. All who are born again, will persevere in the faith till the end. (Stand firm)**

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is

called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our confidence firm to the end.

I want us to look at that last sentence. We have come to share in Christ, IF indeed we hold our confidence firm to the end.

It can also be read the other way around.

If indeed we hold our confidence firm to the end, we have come to share in Christ!

Believers in Christ, those who are born again...will persevere to the end.

Look at **1 John 2:19**

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.

"If they had been of us, they would have continued with us!"

Look at **Hebrews 6:4-12**

**4** For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift,

and have shared in the Holy Spirit, **5** and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, **6** and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt. **7** For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. **8** But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned.

**9** Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation. **10** For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do. **11** And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, **12** so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

- I. There will be some who *seem* to be born again but do not have saving faith.
- II. All who are born again, *will* persevere in the faith. We give evidence that we have been born again BY persevering in the faith...till the end.

### **III. All who are born again are *eternally secure* in Christ.**

**John 6: 37-40** says, "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, to do my own will but the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

**John 10:27-29** says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life 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 my Father's hand."

**Philippians 1:6** says, "I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ."

**1 Peter 1:3-5** says, **3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, **5** who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

**2 Timothy 1:12** But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.

**Ephesians 1:11-14 11** In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, **12** so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. **13** In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, **14** who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

**Can I lose my salvation?** No, you cannot.



- I. There will be some who *seem* to be born again but do not have saving faith.
  - II. All who are born again, *will* persevere in the faith.
  - III. All who are born again are *eternally secure* in Christ.
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The application today is quite simple.

**Keep persevering in the faith! Stand firm.**

The Scriptures give us encouragement to do just that.

I'd like to read some of them to you.

1 Corinthians 16:13

2 Corinthians 13:5

Galatians 5:1

Ephesians 6:13

Philippians 4:1

Colossians 1:21-23

Hebrews 3:12

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our confidence firm to the end.

Dear brothers and sisters, keep on persevering in your faith. Keep pursuing Christ. Don't coast. Stand firm!

**You are eternally secure in Christ; through and by the work he accomplished on the cross for you.**

**But keep giving evidence that you have been born again by continuing in the faith.**

And let us encourage one another to stand firm until Christ returns.

Let's pray.