

## ETERNAL SECURITY (59)

What should a believer do when he sins? He should do exactly what David did in **Psalm 51** - go straight to God and honestly confess it (**I John 1:9**). Here is where one will find the forgiveness of God.

This is the true interpretation and application of **Psalm 51:11**. This text has **nothing** to do with losing one's salvation. The LORD God had guaranteed David long before he sinned that He would give him special eternal blessings (**II Samuel 7:4-16**). David never questioned his salvation, but after his sin, he still wanted to serve God and be used by God and receive the blessings of God. **Psalm 51:11** is his prayer for this and according to **I Chronicles 29:26-28**, God answered his prayer.

### **(Passage #5) - II Thessalonians 2:3**

Here is a N.T. passage that is dispensationally misinterpreted and applied to the issue of eternal security. One who cites this text claims that the "apostasy" (literally "falling away") refers to Christians who were once saved. The belief is those who apostatize are those who fall away from their faith and lose their salvation.

There are two immediate contextual observations we would like to make:

- 1) Nowhere does the context suggest that those who fall away are believers.
- 2) This falling away immediately precedes the "man of lawlessness" being revealed.

The point Paul is making is that the Antichrist will not be revealed until there has been a great turning away from God. The word "apostasy" refers to a revolt or defection. The idea is just prior to the revealing of the Antichrist, there will be a major revolt against God and His Word. There will be a great defection from truth. This revolt will not be led by believers; it will be led by unbelievers.

The Thessalonians were troubled and shaken by some who were claiming they were in the Tribulation and were experiencing the "Day of the Lord" (**2:2**). One of the reasons for the claim was that many nonbelievers were dominating the world and were opposing the believer. Paul writes to these believers to explain that this rise in godlessness is a necessary part of the process that will eventually lead to the "Day of the Lord" and the revealing of the Antichrist. This passage has nothing whatsoever to do with one losing his salvation. In fact, Paul clearly identifies the Thessalonians as being brothers who were strong in the faith (**1:3-4; 2:1**).

Every one of these passages is dispensationally misinterpreted. In fact, in most instances, the dispensation in which the passage sits is totally ignored. Such an approach to Scripture fails to "rightly divide the Word of Truth."

### **Interpretive Heading #2 - Passages of Scripture which are misinterpreted contextually .**

When one refers to a verse that one claims proves you can lose your salvation, you can almost bank on the fact that the context has been ignored. There are many passages that are cited by

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Arminians that have absolutely nothing to do contextually with the point they are trying to prove, namely, one may lose salvation. We may analyze contextual misinterpretations under several different subheadings.

**(Subheading #1)** - Passages that refer to false teachers.

There are several passages which are cited as “proof texts” which contextually have nothing to do with losing salvation, but have everything to do with false teachers who surface as we near the end of the Church Age.

**(Passage #1)** - **I Timothy 4:1-2**

This passage is often cited as a proof that one may “fall away from the faith” and lose salvation. However, upon a careful examination of the context, it will be seen that this is not what Paul is teaching Timothy. The paramount point that Paul was communicating to Timothy in I Timothy was that the Church was to be the pillar and support of the Truth (**I Timothy 3:15**).

In these verses, Paul informs Timothy that as we near the end of the Church Age, there will be many teachers who will “fall away” from “the faith.” These teachers will depart from doctrinal truth and purity. The word “fall away” means there will be some who will revolt, withdraw and become apostate concerning the truth of the faith system (Smith, p. 71). The article “the” before faith indicates that there will be many religious teachers who will seductively lure people away from the true and sound faith system. They will actually lead people into a demonic system of works worship that does not conform to the true faith system. The challenge Paul is making to Timothy is to keep carefully teaching the Word of God (**4:11-16**) for in doing this, he will save himself and his hearers from these false teachers and their false doctrines. **This passage has nothing to do with a believer in Jesus Christ losing his salvation.** The context is very clearly false teachers who are leading people into demonic “works” doctrines. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer said of this text - “The notion that some once saved are lost again, receives no support from this Scripture” (Vol. 3, p. 294).

**(Passage #2)** - **II Peter 2:20-22**

These verses are some of the most famous verses in the N.T. as verses that supposedly teach one may lose his salvation. For example, one writer said of these verses - “Peter gave a graphic example of a person once being saved and then being lost ... The Bible states clearly that a person can lose his salvation through neglect and disobedience” (Jimmy Swaggart, *Straight Answers to Tough Questions*, pp. 69-70). Unfortunately, this writer, as all others who appeal to this passage, totally neglect to observe the grammar and the context. When one reads **verse 20**, what immediately comes to our minds is the matter of the pronoun “they.” What is the antecedent of the pronoun “they”? Basic grammar tells us that a pronoun is a word that is used to take the place of a noun, which is found somewhere within the context. Dr. Frank Braun, of the University of Michigan, writes: “A pronoun is a word used in place of a noun, in order to avoid awkward repetitions” (Braun, p. 16). Since **verse 20, verse 19, verse 18, verse 15, verse 13, verse 12** and **verse 10** all contain the pronoun “they,” one would think it very important and logical to resolve the matter of the antecedent God originally used.

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If we go back to **verse 1**, we see the specific identity of those being discussed in this context - **false prophets and false teachers**. These dangerous men are teaching destructive heresy and promoting a sensual behavior, and are leading people astray. Although these false instructors have been exposed to truth (**2:20**), they eventually reject it and follow their own lustful ways as a dog returns to his vomit and as a sow wallows in the mud (**2:22**). No education changes their nature. So it is with a false teacher - he may be exposed to truth but he will always reject it.

### (Passage #3) - Jude 3-19

Here is a text that is often cited as a “proof-text” for losing one’s salvation. Frankly, upon a careful examination of the text, it is hard to imagine how any can conclude this passage promotes this point.

**Verse 4** makes it clear that the people being discussed are the “**ungodly**” persons who have been marked out for “**condemnation**.” This would immediately suggest the discussion does not concern believers. **Verse 19** makes it clear that the people in question are “**devoid**” of the Spirit, which again makes it very clear that the discussion concerns an unbeliever. Upon a close examination of the context, it is clear that Jude’s point is not that of a believer losing his salvation; it is that of an unbeliever influencing the believer to have attitudes and behavior contrary to the truth. Jude wanted the believers to be built up in the faith (**Jude 20**) and not to be swayed by the godless heretics who were teaching false things and living licentious lives. Henry A. Virkler, who has written a well-accepted book on Hermeneutics - *“The Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation”* writes: “The meaning of a text cannot be interpreted with any degree of certainty without historical, cultural and contextual analysis” (Virkler, p. 77).

Contexts which refer to false prophets and teachers must never be allowed to be applied to true teachers and true believers. Unfortunately, those who postulate the belief that one may lose his salvation often use verses from such contexts as proof for their position. Such mishandling of the Word leaves God’s sheep without real knowledge and understanding (**i.e. Jeremiah 3:15**).

### (Sub-Heading #2) - Passages that refer to moral reformation or outward profession .

There are certain passages that refer to those who profess salvation, but do not possess salvation. Those who use verses from such contexts fail to “rightly divide” the true context.

### (Passage #1) - Luke 11:24-26

Here is a passage oftentimes cited as one that proves one may lose his salvation. There is no better discussion on this text than that of Lewis Sperry Chafer: “The Savior is here presenting a phase of truth related to demonology which is not even remotely related to salvation by grace. A demon going out of a person, leaving that former abode free from such an unholy tenant, may return taking with him other demons worse in character than the first tenant. The fallacy of the use of this Scripture to teach insecurity is seen in the fact that the removal of a demon is not equivalent of salvation, in which salvation the divine nature is imparted. Likewise, the presence of the divine nature in any individual is a certain guarantee that no demon can enter (**I John 4:4**).