

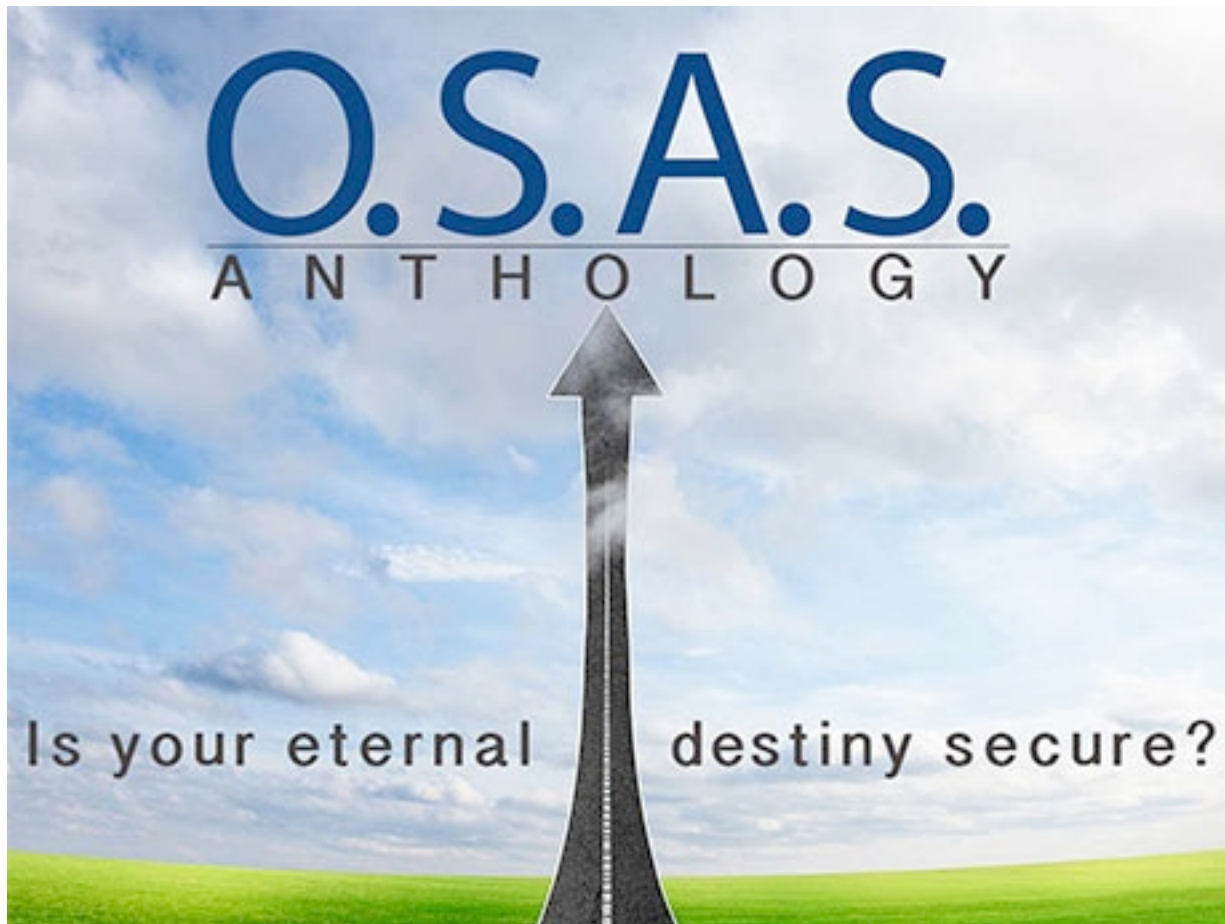
O.S.A.S.

A N T H O L O G Y

Is your eternal destiny secure?

J A C K K E L L E Y

OSAS Anthology



Gracethrufaith.com | Jack Kelley

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Introduction

The doctrine of eternal security, or OSAS (once saved always saved) is one of the most hotly debated topics in all of Christianity. Did the Lord's death really pay for all the sins of our life, thereby guaranteeing a place in Heaven for all born again believers?

Or, are we responsible for the sins we commit after we become born again, running the risk that our post salvation behavior can cause God to rescind his promise to save us?

And if God will not rescind His promise, can we walk away from our relationship with Him and effectively forfeit our salvation?

You'll find the answers to these and other questions in this book, as well as Biblical answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about OSAS.

OSAS, The Whole Story

If you follow our “Ask a Bible Teacher” feature, you know how many comments I’ve received that question the Doctrine of Eternal Security (aka Once Saved Always Saved or OSAS). Based on their content I’ve concluded that many people neither understand OSAS nor have they considered the alternative.

Let’s Begin At The Beginning

It’s time to set the record straight once and for all. What does it take to be saved? I think the best answer to that question is the one the Lord gave in **John 6:28-29**:

Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”
Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

Here was a perfect opportunity to list all the things we have to do to meet God’s requirements. Jesus could have rattled off the 10 commandments. He could have repeated the Sermon on the Mount. He could have listed any number of admonitions and restrictions necessary to achieve and maintain God’s expectations of us. But what did He say? *“Believe in the one He has sent.”* Period. It was a repeat of **John 3:16**, confirming that belief in the Son is the one and only requirement for salvation.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

A few chapters later, in **John 6:38-40**, He said that this wasn’t just His idea, as if that wouldn’t be enough, but that His Father was in complete agreement. And not only would our belief suffice to provide us with eternal life, but that it was God’s will that Jesus would lose none of those who believe. You and I have been known to disobey God’s will, but has Jesus ever done so? And isn’t He the one who’s been charged with the responsibility for keeping us? Let’s read it:

For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. (**John 6:38-40**)

Just in case we missed this promise, Jesus made it again even more clearly in **John 10:28-30**:

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.

The Father and the Son have both accepted responsibility for our security. Once we're in Their hands, no one can get us away.

I have purposely only used words straight from the Lord's own mouth to make this case because I can already hear the choruses of "Yes Buts" mounting as those who refuse to take them at face value get ready to trot out their favorite verses denying Eternal Security, misinterpreted though they are.

The one characteristic of God's that gives us the most comfort is knowing that He can't lie or change His mind or contradict Himself. He can't say something in one place and then say something entirely different in another. He's consistent. If He says that we're saved solely because of our belief in Him, and that He's accepted responsibility for keeping us so, then we can count on that. As we'll see, anything in the Bible that seems to contradict these simple, straightforward statements has to be talking about something else.

But first, since He puts so much emphasis on belief, let's take a closer look at that word. What does He mean when He says "believe"? It must be more than just a casual thing because reliable statistics show, for example, that 85% of those who come forward to "receive the Lord" at a crusade or other evangelistic outreach never form any connection with a church or Bible Study or in any other way demonstrate a relationship with the Lord afterward.

And Jesus spoke of the seed that fell on rocky places. He said:

This is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he

has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. (**Matt. 13:20-21**)

If these people were saved and then fell away, all His promises above have been broken. There must be more to this. So what does it mean to believe?

The Greek word for believe is “pistis.” According the Strong’s Concordance, it’s a “conviction or belief respecting man’s relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it.” In connection with the Lord Jesus, it means “a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God.”

The Apostle Paul gave us valuable insight into the nature of this belief. He wrote:

If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. (**Romans 10:9-10**)

This isn’t just some intellectual thing that carries us away on the words of a captivating speaker, only to leave us flat a short time later. It’s a conviction that’s formed deep in our heart, the realization that Jesus is not just a man. He’s the Lord Himself, and He took upon Himself the penalty due us for our sins, which is death. And to prove that God counted His death as sufficient, He raised Jesus from the dead to be seated beside Him in the Heavenly realms. (**Ephes. 1:20**) Since God can’t dwell in the presence of sin, and since the wages of sin is death, every one of our sins has to have been paid for. If even one remained unpaid, Jesus would still be in the grave. We have to believe that Jesus rose from the grave in order to believe that we will.

It’s that kind of belief that gets you saved and keeps you that way, because it sets in motion a chain of events that’s irreversible. There are four links in this chain. You supply two and the Lord supplies two. You hear and believe, and the Lord marks and guarantees:

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory. (**Ephesians 1:13-14**)

The word translated “deposit” is a legal term. Today we would say Earnest Money. It’s a down payment that constitutes a legal obligation to follow through with the purchase. If you’ve ever bought any Real Estate, you’re familiar with the term. If not, here’s another example. It’s like we’ve been put on “lay away.” The price has been paid and we’ve been taken off the display shelf until the one who has purchased us returns to claim us. In the mean time we cannot be bought by anyone else, because we legally belong to the one who has paid the deposit. *“You are not your own,”* we’re told. *“You were bought with a price.”* (1 Cor. 6:19-20)

All of this happened at our first moment of belief, before we could do anything to either earn or lose our position. The man on the cross beside Jesus is the prototype for this transaction. Having done something bad enough to get himself executed, he was promised a place in Paradise solely because he believed in his heart that Jesus was the Lord of a coming Kingdom.

Paul made it even clearer when he repeated this incredible promise in **2 Cor. 1:21-22**:

Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

This time He removed all doubt as to just Who it is that keeps us saved. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. What could be clearer?

Union And Fellowship

If the Doctrine of Eternal Security is so clear then why all the disagreement about it? I’ve found two reasons. The first is the two-sided nature of our relationship with the Lord. I call one side Union. It’s eternal and unconditional, based only on our belief. **Ephesians 1:13-14** describes our Union with God, sealed and guaranteed. Once we’re born again, we can’t become unborn. It’s good forever. The Holy Spirit is sealed within us from our first moment of belief until the day of redemption.

I call the other side Fellowship and it’s a bit more complicated. Fellowship is that state of continual closeness to God that enables Him to bless us in our daily lives, by making things happen for us and protecting us from attack. It’s like He’s teamed up with us to give us a supernatural advantage. Fellowship is defined by **1 John 1:8-9** as being both Earthly and conditional upon our behavior. Even as believers, as long as we’re here on Earth we’ll continue to sin. Since God can’t abide in the presence of sin, our

unconfessed sins interrupt our Earthly relationship with Him and may deprive us of blessings we might have otherwise received. We're still saved in the eternal sense, but out of Fellowship here on Earth.

When we're out of Fellowship, we're legitimate targets for our enemy's mischief, just like Job was. From **Job 9:21, 10:3,7, 12:4, 27:7**, and all 41 verses of **Job 31** we know his sin was self-righteousness. Because he wouldn't confess his sin, he was out of fellowship. Therefore, when asked to do so, God had to let Satan afflict him in order to bring him to his senses. Once Job confessed (**Job 42:1-6**), he was restored (**Job 42:10-17**). Even though he was the most righteous man on Earth, Job still had to confess to be restored to fellowship with God.

For a New Testament illustration, read the parable of the Prodigal Son. (**Luke 15:11-32**) During the time he was off on his own, the prodigal son still belonged to his father's family, but he didn't receive any of its blessings. He was out of Fellowship with his father. But as soon as he returned and confessed his sins he was immediately restored as if nothing had happened.

It's the same with us. When we refuse to confess our sins, it's like we've moved away from our Father. We still belong to His family, but we won't receive any of its blessings. Like both Job and the Prodigal, when we return to Him and confess our sins, we're immediately purified from all unrighteousness and restored to Fellowship.

One reason that many Christians live such defeated lives is that having only learned about the Union part of being a believer, they only know that God has forgiven their sins and that they'll go to be with Him when they die or are Raptured. They don't realize that they still need to confess every time they sin to stay in Fellowship. And so, being deprived of God's providence, they may become discouraged and even stop praying and attending church. Other believers, who don't understand the dual relationship either, look at the mess they're in and think they must have lost their salvation.

Union and Fellowship are not just New Testament ideas. In the Old Testament, even when Israel was being obedient in thought and action, doing their best to please God, the priests still had to sacrifice a lamb on the altar every morning and every evening for the sins of the people. **1 John 1:9** is the New Testament equivalent of those daily sacrifices for sin:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

This verse was written for believers who are already saved, but are in danger of being out of Fellowship because of their sins.

The Gift And the Prize

The other reason people get confused is that there are two types of benefits in Eternity. The first is the free Gift called Salvation that's given to all who ask in faith irrespective of merit, and guarantees our admission into the Kingdom. **Ephesians 2:8-9** is the model, saying that salvation is a Gift from God.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.

The second consists of Heavenly rewards we can earn for the things we do as believers here on Earth. **Philippians 3:13-14** are good verses for explaining this:

Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus

So, in addition to the Gift, there's a Prize.

A gift is something given out of love, irrespective of merit, and is never taken back. A prize, on the other hand, is something we qualify for and earn. And if we're not careful we can lose it. (**Rev. 3:11**) Paul had already received the Gift of salvation, it was behind him. Now he was focused on winning the Prize as well.

In **1 Corinthians 9:24-27** he explained the difference in greater detail:

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

No Olympic athlete was satisfied just to have qualified to participate in the games. Everyone wanted to win the victor's crown. Likewise, we shouldn't be satisfied just to have received the Gift of salvation. We must now live our lives as believers in such a way as to win the Prize as well.

The Bible calls some of these prizes crowns, and while the athlete's crown soon wilted

away (it was a wreath of ivy) the crowns believers can win last forever. They're worth making some sacrifices for. That's why Paul said:

I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. (**1 Cor. 9:27**)

The crowns are identified as the Everlasting Crown (Victory) in **1 Cor 9:25**, Crown of the Soul Winner in **Phil 4:1** and **1 Thes 2:19**, Crown of Righteousness in **2 Tim 4:8**, Crown of Life in **Jas 1:12** and **Rev 2:10**, and the Crown of Glory in **1 Peter 5:4**.

The difference between the Gift and the Prize is also seen in **1 Cor. 3:12-15**:

If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames

At the judgment of believers, the quality of our work on earth will be tested by fire. Only work that survives the test will bring us a reward. But notice that even if all our work is destroyed in the fire, we'll still have our salvation. Why? Because it's a free Gift, given out of love, irrespective of merit.

The Lord mentioned other rewards as well. In **Matt. 6:19-21** He advised us:

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

There are things we can do as believers while here on Earth that will cause deposits to be made to our heavenly account. Some believe that this passage refers to the way we use the money we're given. Do we use it to enrich ourselves, stacking up possessions that far exceed our needs? Or do we use it to further the work of the Kingdom? Both Jesus (**Luke 6:38**) and Paul (**2 Cor. 9:6**) encouraged generous giving, saying our generosity toward others would determine how generous the Lord will be toward us.

To summarize, in the New Testament there are verses like **Ephesians 1:13-14** that talk about Union. There are verses like **1 John 1: 8-9** that talk about Fellowship. There are

verses like **Ephesians 2:8-9** that talk about the Gift and there are verses like **1 Cor 9:24-27** that talk about the Prize.

Those that stress belief, explain the permanent nature of our bond with God, and are directed toward eternity are Union verses. Those that involve grace and faith are Gift verses. Those that require work and are directed at the quality of our lives on Earth are Fellowship verses, and those that require work and involve eternal rewards are Prize verses.

When you view Scripture from this perspective, all of the apparent contradictions disappear and you no longer have to wonder why God seems to be saying one thing here and something different there. The issue becomes one of correctly identifying the focal point of the particular passage you're looking at. Determine the context by reading verses around it, and assign it to one of the four categories.

Give Us An Example

Hebrews 6:4-6 is a passage often cited in opposition to Eternal Security. The entire letter is to Jewish believers who were being enticed back into keeping the Law, so the context is New Covenant vs. Old. And in verse 9 the writer hints that he's been talking about things that accompany salvation. That tells us that verses 4-6 are not related to salvation but things that accompany it. More importantly the idea that a believer could do something to irretrievably lose his salvation is in direct contradiction to the very clear promise that the Holy Spirit is sealed within us from the very first moment of belief until the day of redemption as a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance.

So what could these believers be in danger of falling away from due to their sins? Fellowship. And what could prevent them from being restored? Continuing the practice of Old Covenant remedies for sin rather than invoking **1 John 1:9**. They'd be relegating the death of the Lord to the same status as that of the lambs the priests sacrificed twice every day for the sins of the people.

The Law was only a shadow of the good things to come, not the realities themselves. Once the Reality appeared, the shadow was no longer effective. And what would be their penalty for this? Living a defeated life, bearing no fruit, all their works burned in the judgment of **1 Cor. 3**. But still saved? Yes. **Hebrews 6:4-6** is a Fellowship passage.

Suppose There Is No Security?

In closing, let's look at the alternative. What are we faced with? If **Hebrews 6:4-6** for example applies to our salvation then if we ever sin after being saved we'll be lost

forever with no way back, because the Lord would have to be crucified all over again to retrieve us. The New Covenant would be worse than the Old, not better. They were condemned for their actions. According to **Matt. 5** we'd be condemned for our thoughts. They couldn't murder. We couldn't even be angry. They couldn't commit adultery. We couldn't even have a lustful thought. Think of it. No anger, ever. No lust, ever. No envy, ever. No idolatry, ever. No favoritism or discrimination, ever. No impure thoughts or deeds of any kind, ever.

Is this the Good News, the incomparable riches of His Grace? Did God become man and die the most painful death ever devised only to put His children into an even more untenable position than before? Are we saved by grace only to be placed under the constraints of an even more severely administered law? I can't believe so.

Some take a more moderate view of this saying that God would never take back the gift of salvation, but that we can return it. To justify this position they have to put words in the Lord's mouth. When He says in **John 10:28**, "No one can snatch them out of my hand," they have to insert the phrase "but us" after "no one". Same with **Romans 8:38-39**:

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Here they have to insert the phrase "but us" after "in all creation".

In addition, they have to ignore the fact that we are no longer in control of our eternal destiny. One of the points Paul made in **2 Cor. 1:21-22** is that God has taken ownership of us. This confirms the statement he made in **1 Cor 6:19** when he said, "You are not your own. You were bought at a price." **1 Peter 1:18-19** tells us the price was "the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect." Simply put, there's no power in Heaven or on Earth, including us, that can undo what God has done for us.

None of this defense of Eternal Security is intended to condone sin. As an indication of our gratitude for the gift of salvation, believers are continually admonished in Scripture to live our lives in a manner pleasing to God. Not to earn or keep our salvation, but to thank the Lord for having given it to us. And to help us do that, the Holy Spirit has come to dwell in us to guide and direct us, and to pray for us. Since the Spirit of God lives in us we are no longer controlled by the sin nature and can choose to please God by the way we live. And even though we do this out of gratitude for the Gift He's already given, which is Union with Him, He blesses us both here on Earth (Fellowship) and in Eternity

(the Prize).

The balance of this book is a collection of all the questions I've received about this subject, asking me to explain verses in the Bible that seem to contradict OSAS (eternal security). They are listed in book order for easier reference.

OSAS, Really?

Q. Several times you've said we're saved forever and nothing can change that. Doesn't that mean that Christians are free to do whatever they want without fear of any consequences?

A. Technically it does, and if we were not indwelt by the Holy Spirit who helps guide our behavior, this might happen. But history shows that it hasn't. In fact the Church has been a force for behavior that pleases God throughout its history. And even today, after the wholesale invasion of liberal theology, false doctrine and the "wolves among the sheep" who promote these things, it's people in the Church who continue to lead the fight against abortion, sexual slavery, same sex marriage, and other behaviors that clearly violate God's standards for human conduct. And it's people in the church who fight for Bible based education, abstinence among children, and other "traditional" values.

OSAS, Really? Follow Up

Q. After reading [OSAS, Really?](#) and many of your other responses concerning OSAS, I can't help but wonder why some "Christians" still have a hard time understanding the concept. It's a simple concept and is backed by strong unrefuted verses. I have discussed this with some believers who don't believe in OSAS and they never refute the verses that support OSAS outright but instead refer to other verses. Is it because they are really unbelievers who haven't genuinely accepted Christ alluding to the possibility that they haven't been born again, therefore spiritually dead, or is it simply a lack of understanding intellectually?

A. It's not for me to say whether people like this are saved or not. I've found several reasons why people don't believe in Eternal Security (OSAS). Some are just accepting what they've been taught instead of doing their own homework. This can lead to merely searching the Bible for verses they can use to confirm what they already believe instead of studying the whole book to see what it really says.

Others may be infected with a spiritual pride similar to that of the Pharisees of Biblical times and don't think it's right that people who don't appear to be as righteous as they are should be allowed a free pass.

But I think the vast majority of believers who reject OSAS simply don't understand that although nine different writers were involved in composing the New Testament there was only one Author, the Spirit of God (**2 Tim. 3:16**), and being God He can't contradict Himself. He can't say one thing in one place and something else in another.

Because of this lack of understanding, when they see verses that appear to contradict OSAS, they default to conditional security. With a little further study they could resolve the issue, but sadly they don't make the attempt. As you know most of the questions I've answered on the subject have to do with these perceived contradictions.

OSAS And Why Bother Being Good?

Q. According to many of your comments about Eternal Security, nothing can cause us to become 'unsaved'. What then, is the point of a Christian offering himself as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12) and living a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ (Phil.1)? We all might as well accept Jesus as Lord and Savior then carry on living exactly as we were before.

Please don't get me wrong, I believe totally in the gift of salvation and know there is nothing I could ever do that would be worthy enough to earn it. The gratitude I feel to the Lord for dying for me cannot be put into words. But what about those who don't put their faith into action and continually live as the world would live, refusing to take responsibility for their actions and avoiding repentance. On a personal level I have sacrificed what my flesh has wanted in favor of what God would have me do. Are you saying I needn't have bothered?

A. One of the most disappointing discoveries I've made as a Bible teacher is how little effort the church as a whole invests in teaching the benefits of living a life pleasing to the Lord. In fact some Christian leaders seem much more willing to threaten us with the loss of our salvation for not adopting a Christian lifestyle than they are to convey the Lord's promises of blessing for doing so.

Here are two great reasons for living a life pleasing to the Lord.

1) because it's the only way given in Scripture for us to express our gratitude to the Lord for saving our life and granting us a place of honor in His Kingdom, and

2) because in living the Christian life we're also promised great blessings both here on Earth and in eternity. These include escaping the bondage of our destructive behavior and experiencing the joy of the abundant life the Lord came to bring us (**John 10:10**) and the receipt of a victor's crown straight from the hand of the Lord at the bema judgment (**1 Cor. 9:25**).

Paul said that the Christian who strives to please God is like the Olympic athlete who trains for the Games. We both sacrifice nothing but the wasting of our time on frivolous and often destructive behavior in favor of devoting ourselves to a noble quest that brings great reward. And we both experience the same sense of personal fulfillment when we're victorious. The difference is the athlete does it all for a temporary reward and the accolades of men, where we do it for a permanent reward and the blessing of our Lord (**1 Cor. 9:24-27**).

OSAS And Backsliders

Q. People who don't believe in OSAS describe those who were once saved but have fallen away from the faith as being back sliders. From the perspective of OSAS, is there any such thing as a back slider? If so, how would you describe it?

A. From the OSAS perspective we're all back sliders. None of us has maintained the pure child like belief we once had. None of us still has an unshakable faith in miracles. We don't dissolve into tears the moment worship starts anymore, and we don't show up a half hour ahead of time for church just because we can't wait to get there. We all spend a lot more time worrying about our jobs and our financial situation on Earth than we do about our treasure in Heaven. We all sin more often and more seriously than we did at the start. And we all take the Lord a lot more for granted than we used to. We call it being more mature in our faith but the truth is that we're really just back sliders.

OSAS And Repentance

Q. I concur that the work of the Cross was and is sufficient to remove the stain of sin in any and all souls, but what happens with those repetitive sins that are not repented of (turning away from)? OSAS gives argument to the devil's claim in Job that Job only does it because he has no choice. God did protect his life that he might repent and be forgiven for it, but it would have been Job's choice to do so.

I believe salvation will come at the end of this life and no being can forcibly take that hope from you, but life is your profession of faith in Christ. Faith is action not mental acceptance. James ask the question "Where's your faith if you are not living it?" Can a belief that shows no trust save a person? How can you claim to wish a person well while you, having what they need, will not give it to them?

When God called me into the ministry of the Gospel, He did so from Isaiah 58:1, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." It is not my desire to prove you wrong and myself right but that it is only the righteous (obedient, sometimes through repentance) that will inherit the kingdom. If I am wrong then we have not lost anything, but if I am right, then some will loose everything.

A. I agree with some of what you say. However the word repent does not mean to turn away from something but to change one's mind about it. We can't legitimately ask to be saved from our sins until we change our mind and agree that our behavior is sinful. But no where are we told that we have to stop sinning before we can qualify for salvation.

A primary rule of interpretation is that we use clear verses to interpret obscure ones. The clearest verses in the New Testament associate salvation with belief, never with behavior. A change of behavior often comes later at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, but never to the point where we can be considered righteous. Our righteousness comes only through faith and that's what qualifies us for eternity. (**Romans 4:5**) In fact it's because we're sinners that we need to trust God. If we could make it on our own, Jesus didn't have to die.

As far as there being no harm if you're wrong, that's true as long as you apply it only to

you. But when you start teaching others, you must be absolutely certain you are correct in interpreting what the Bible says, otherwise you'll be held accountable. (**James 3:1**)

The clearest interpretation of Scripture is that we're saved because of what we believe (**John 3:16**) and that our place in eternity is guaranteed by God Himself, from the first moment of belief, not after our life is over. (**Ephes. 1:13-14**) Since the Bible is God's word and can't be contradictory everything else on the matter of salvation has to be understood in that context. The Lord knew every sin of your life before you committed the first one and took them all to the cross (**Colossians 2:13-15**). The moment you accepted that and received your pardon you were free because by His one sacrifice he made perfect forever those who are being made holy (**Hebr. 10:14**). Being made, not making themselves.

OSAS And Satan's Fall

Q. I still have a question regarding Satan. If he was in heaven he must have believed in God. He was a guard of God's throne. He must have at one time loved God. He let the sin of pride creep into him. Isn't this an early and prime example of how one could lose his or her salvation by turning against God and letting sin take over in one's life. If you follow the OSAS theology you would have to say that Satan was not really saved or believed in God to begin with. The bible is very clear that Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire.

A. The doctrine of Eternal Security (OSAS) is unique to the Church. It does not apply to angels, it didn't apply in the Old Testament, and it will not apply after the rapture. But speaking to the Church Paul wrote:

Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. (**2 Cor. 1:21-22**)

At the moment of our salvation, God accepted responsibility for us by putting His seal of ownership upon us and sealing his Spirit in our heart. He did this to guarantee our place in His kingdom. No other group had been or will be blessed in this way.

OSAS And Unanswered Prayer

Q. As a follow up to 'Still saved after denying The Lord', I have a question for you.

A friend of mine, once a very loving and dedicated Christian, has over the past several years gone through many traumas in her life. Having thrown herself on God's mercy and spent many hours in prayer, she has received no solution to her problems. For example, she has prayed constantly that the Lord would bring peace to the heart of her mother -also a Christian- who is suffering from dementia and is living in a confused and tortured state literally trapped inside her own body. These prayers have not been answered.

She now believes in her heart that God can not exist and that Jesus was just a good man who was crucified along with countless others.

Where Peter, understandably, denied the Lord out of fear, this lady has made a conscious decision that God is not real – not out of bitterness but by deliberation. What happens to her Salvation?

A. This case, while heart breaking, is no different than any other. If she was truly saved then, even though like so many other sheep she has wandered off, the Lord is committed to bring her back before she dies. God has put the seal of His ownership on her, and His Spirit in her heart, to guarantee her destiny. It's His will that because she has looked to the Son and believed in Him, she will have eternal life and be raised up at the last day. (**2 Cor. 1:21-22 & John 6:40**)

OSAS And Unanswered Prayer

Follow up

You listed four things that you believe can prevent believers from being delivered from their afflictions, putting a very fine point on the issue:

lack of faith, unconfessed sins, Subconscious feelings that we deserve to be afflicted and a secret desire to remain where we are.

My questions are these:

1. If we have a subconscious feeling that we deserve to be afflicted, does God hold this against us? (if so, why?). Your answer seems to imply this.
2. If we are held responsible for things of which we are not conscious, how do we recognize this and “repent” of it?

This is a very serious set of questions for me as I am very introspective, know I cannot fully understand what’s going on inside me, so it would seem that I am doomed to a life of (mostly) unanswered prayer.

A. Regarding people who pray for deliverance when they have a feeling that they deserve their affliction, James put it this way:

But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does. (**James 1:7-8**)

If at some level we believe that we deserve our afflictions, in effect we’re saying that the Lord’s death was not sufficient for us. We have to suffer too in order to become worthy to be delivered. **Isaiah 53:5** says that by His stripes we are healed, not by His stripes

and an unknown amount of our own suffering.

Whenever we put ourselves on the cross to suffer with the Lord we're denying the sufficiency of His work. Dying to self doesn't just mean being willing to give up all the worldly things we place ahead of Him, it also means giving up our need to be a participant in our own deliverance. Harboring any such feelings makes us double minded, and we shouldn't expect anything from the Lord because He will always wait for us to come to the end of ourselves before helping out.

For both these questions, the answer can be found in **Psalm 19:12-13**. David knew that our hearts are so wicked that we sin in countless ways we aren't even aware of, so He wrote this prayer:

Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults. Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression.

I don't believe God is looking for ways to get us on a technicality, but I do believe it's very important to Him that we realize we don't have a single thing going for us except His Grace. We're such habitual sinners, and sinning is so much a part of our nature that we can't begin to keep track of them all. But He can, and by asking Him to forgive our hidden faults, we've got everything covered and don't have to worry about it.

OSAS And The Prodigal Son

Q. I have been converted to OSAS by your ministry. However, I must disagree with your use of the parable of the prodigal as proof of the OSAS doctrine. That is the story of the licentious son and the legalistic son, neither had a relationship with their father, as one was in a far country and the other was in a far field. The only way a person can be saved is through repentance and before the prodigal repents, he is merely a lost youth trying to find fulfillment in life.

A. First, let's review the meaning of repentance to make sure we're on the same page. The Greek word translated "repent" in the Bible is "metanoeo". It means to change our mind about something. It's a combination of "meta" (after) and "noeo" (to perceive or understand). It's like saying, "I used to believe one way, but that was before I understood. Now that I understand I believe a different way. I have repented."

But the importance of the parable as it concerns OSAS is that even when he was away living his life of sin, the prodigal never stopped being his father's son. It's an argument against the notion that believers can walk away from their connection to God. When we are born again we literally become one of God's children (**John 1:12-13**). At that time God adopts us into His family in the same sense that an earthly father adopts a child. It's a legally binding transaction that cannot be reversed and gives us the full right of "sonship". This is proven by Paul's statement that we are not only His children but also His heirs (**Galatians 4:4-7**). Only children with legal standing can be heirs to their father's estate.

The prodigal went through a period of rebellion and left his father's house but there was nothing he could do to sever his connection to his father. He could not stop being his father's son. Once we are born again the same restriction applies to us. In **2 Cor. 1:21-22** Paul wrote that God has set his seal of ownership on us and put His spirit in our hearts as a deposit guaranteeing this.

OSAS And Being Forced To Recant

Q. I heard of a Vietnamese man who has been forced to recant his new found faith in Christ; he has signed a document saying he recants, but will also be required to sacrifice to his ancestors in order to publicly prove he has recanted. Matthew 10: 33 says that if we deny Christ before men he will deny us before the father. Would you please comment on this terrible situation, and also what relationship Matt 10:33 has to OSAS, in your opinion.

A. God knows the motives of our heart. He also knows that fear can cause us to do things we wouldn't otherwise do. The example of Peter's denial is a good one (**Matt. 26:69-75**). Having denied the Lord 3 times in a single night, even after the Lord warned him about it, Peter was fully restored and became a leader in the early Church.

Under extreme duress, we can be forced to say or do just about anything. But no one can ever force us to change what we believe in our heart, and the Lord knew Peter's heart was true. If that Vietnamese man has truly trusted the Lord for his salvation, then his tormentors have achieved a hollow victory at best, and he will be there when the Lord takes vengeance on them.

As for **Matt. 10:33**, it obviously applies to non-believers whose hearts are hardened against the Lord.

OSAS And Suicide

Q. First I wanted to thank you for your awesome website. It is very clear that you thoroughly study God's work and have a good understanding of it. And you have been a tremendous help in motivating me in my walk with the Lord.

Having said that I would like to ask for clarification on your view of suicide. You had stated in answering a previous question that you believed that if a person committed suicide and had previously received the gift of salvation, that person would spend eternity with God. Having been raised Pentecostal, the Once Saved Always Saved belief has not been something I would say I have believed in, but the way you describe it and back it up with scripture, I am tending to believe you have valid points.

Until we get to the issue of suicide. I am having a hard time believing that this is not a sin that will keep you out of heaven. If you are right, then, we Christians could always take the easy way out when things got tough. We could say "I'm ready to be with Jesus, and tired of this world" and take our life, and instantly be with him. That is the one area I have come across that is preventing me from getting completely 'onboard' your belief, of OSAS.

A. The idea that suicide is an unforgivable sin came from a time before theologians understood that God is not someone with an inexhaustible supply of time but is outside of time altogether. They believed that since a person who commits suicide can't repent of his or her sin and ask forgiveness, it couldn't be forgiven.

We now know that God is outside of time, knows the end from the beginning, and saw all the sins of our lifetime before we were born. When He went to the cross, He took all of them and nailed them there (**Colossians 2:13-15 & Hebrews 10:12-14**) including the sin of murder, whether of self or another. When you think about it, it doesn't make sense that God would forgive a person for murdering some one else, but wouldn't forgive someone who murders him or her self.

As for opting out by killing ourselves when things get tough, that argument doesn't make any more sense than the one legalists use to deny the doctrine of Grace, saying that if we were saved by grace alone, everyone would run around raping and pillaging without restraint or regret. Even non-believers just don't act that way.

I believe the act of suicide is motivated by a severe demonic oppression that can overpower even a believer. And when it does God knew it would happen before granting the believer's plea for salvation, and had already extended His forgiveness to cover all the sins of the believer's life including the last one.

OSAS And The Mark Of The Beast

Q. Regarding the question and answer “OSAS And Being Forced To Recant”, does that apply to those that would accept the mark of the beast under duress?

A. Remember, the rules are different for Tribulation believers than they are during the Church Age. For one thing, they won't have Eternal Security and will have to be obedient to the commandments as evidence of their faith. Everyone on Earth will be warned in advance that by taking the Mark they'll be consigning themselves to Hell. **(Rev. 14:9-11)** Believers will be expected to surrender their lives rather than submit to the anti-Christ. **(Rev. 14:12-13)**

OSAS And Mature Believers

Q. I believe in Once Saved Always Saved, but I hear from some people that when you are a mature believer, you have the choice to “leave the house” and forfeit your salvation and be damned. God is not going to let an immature believer leave the house, since he does not know any better, but when he or she knows about departing from God, he can make the choice and go to hell. Does the Bible truly say when you are a mature believer, you can walk away and be damned?

A. The Bible makes no such statement. Think about it. A mature believer is someone who knows what they believe and why they believe it. They’ve acquired Bible knowledge and understand the concepts of both eternal life and eternal punishment. Do you really think that such a person would consciously reject eternal life in favor of eternal punishment?

But more importantly, the Bible clearly argues against this preposterous notion. For instance in **Ephesians 1:13-14** Paul said our salvation was guaranteed from the time we first believed and the Holy Spirit was sent to us as a seal marking us as God’s possession. **2 Cor. 1:21-22** confirms this saying in effect that God has taken ownership of us and it is He who makes us stand firm in Christ. In **1 Cor. 6:19-20** Paul said we have become a Temple of the Holy Spirit and are no longer our own, but have been bought at a price. In **John 10:27-30** Jesus said no one can take us out of His or His father’s hands. And in **Romans 8:38-39** Paul said no power in Heaven or on Earth can separate us from the Love of God. These passages make it clear that once we become believers we belong to God and can no longer choose to depart from Him.

Therefore, a person who walks away, or “leaves the house” as you put it, never belonged to the house in the first place. John said if they had belonged to us they would have remained with us, but their going showed that none of them belonged to us (**1 John 2:19**).

OSAS And Assemblies Of God

Q. I believe that salvation is a free gift from God and that once we put our faith in Jesus that we are saved forever according to the Bible. Not because of anything we have done, but because of who God is and what He's done. I attend an Assembly of God church and their position and the Pastor's is that you can give your salvation back by continuing in sin or stop believing. My question is this, should a person stay at a church that opposes eternal security? Thank you for all you do and God bless you!

A. In the first place everyone who is saved continues to sin, and **2 Cor 1:21** says that it's God who makes us stand firm. In addition Jesus said that it's God's will that He would never lose any of us but raise us all up at the last day. (**John 6:39-40**)

And finally, there's the issue of the Holy Spirit being sealed with in us, guaranteeing our redemption. (**Ephes 1:13-14**)

The AG position is not consistent with those scriptures, nor are there any others that support their position. Whether you should find another place of worship or not is between you and the Lord. If you're otherwise happy where you are, ask the Lord to give you direction and don't do anything until you sense Him prompting you.

OSAS And The Unfaithful

Servant

Q. Matthew 24 verses 44 onwards speaks of an unfaithful servant who is not watching for the return of his master. As a result he will be banished to a place where there is 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' amongst the hypocrites. What do you make of this in light of 'once saved always saved?'

A. This one fools a lot of people. First of all this is a parable, which means that everything is symbolic, but more importantly the timing of this parable is just after the 2nd coming. The Church will be long gone and once saved always saved will be a thing of the past. (Tribulation believers are not guaranteed their salvation as the parable of the 10 virgins (**Matt. 25:1-13**) and **Rev. 16:15** explain.)

Second, look at the symbolism used in the parable. The servants represent Tribulation pastors, the master's household is the body of Tribulation believers, and the food they distribute is the word. Some will be faithful to the Lord's word and teach the truth. They'll be rewarded when He returns.

But others will teach a false doctrine, as represented by eating and drinking with drunkards. They won't be expecting the Lord and will beat (oppress) their flocks with lies about His coming. When He returns it'll be too late for them and they'll be cast out of the kingdom for their hypocrisy. The Geek word translated hypocrites means two-faced. They'll be guilty of saying they believe the truth, but teaching a lie. I don't believe these false teachers were ever saved.

This parable is similar to **Matt. 7:21-23** where the Lord said:

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

OSAS Believe It Or Not

Q. I love your site and have found it very helpful, however I have a question. I am a born again Christian and I believe in OSAS, but lately I've been having a very difficult time accepting it for me. I understand that Jesus died for all of our sins, and all those who believe in him will be saved and that salvation can come only through faith. But at the same time I often feel as if my own personal sins will somehow leave me exempt from that. No matter how much evidence I read I just can't seem to accept the fact that I am saved, and still feel as though I need to earn it and that if I commit sins I will somehow forfeit my salvation.

A. I've answered so many questions on OSAS that I normally just refer people to my other answers. But your question is different because you're not questioning OSAS in general, just whether it can apply to you. I know there are others who feel the way you do. They can accept the idea of eternal security in the general sense but have trouble applying it personally. Usually this is due to the mistaken impression that they are not as worthy as other people.

But the truth is that none of us is worthy (**Romans 3:10**) and therefore our salvation is not based on our worthiness. It's based on the Lord's faithfulness. He promised to die for our sins so we could live with Him, and then He did what He promised to do. Believing that is all that's necessary for us (**John 3:16, John 6:28-29**). When we believe He marks us with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance (**Ephesians 1:13-14, 2 Cor. 1:21-22**).

In these two references, Paul explained that it's a cause and effect relationship. The cause is our belief that Jesus died for our sins, and the effect is His guarantee of our inheritance, which is eternal life. **Ephesians 1:13-14** say this relationship takes effect when we hear the gospel and believe it. In other words, when we're first saved.

2 Cor. 1:21-22 adds that it is God who makes us stand firm in Christ (not us). He anointed us, set His mark of ownership on us and put His Spirit in our hearts. This is His guarantee of what is to come. These are the clearest statements of our security in

the Lord anywhere in Scripture. Together they tell us that OSAS is like gravity in that it applies to all of us whether we believe in it or not. This is why Jesus could promise that no one can take us out of His Hands (**John 10:27-30**).

OSAS And Children

Q. You say that all children including babies and the unborn go to heaven if they die before they reach the 'age of accountability'. That means they must already possess eternal life. When they reach the 'age of accountability' and sin they then have to believe the gospel and be born again in order to be saved and go heaven when they die. But if all children from the womb to the 'age of accountability' already possess eternal life how can they lose it? You say that once saved always saved (OSAS); salvation is eternal and can not be lost. Please could you explain from the scriptures how you resolve this contradiction.

A. Putting all the pieces together we can see that God does not hold children accountable for their sins, but that when we "come of age" we become accountable (**Romans 7:9**) and have to choose whether to accept the Lord's death as payment on our behalf (**John 3:16**). If we do, all our sins are forgiven (**Colossians 2:13-14**) and we're permanently saved from the penalties due us (**Ephesians 1:13-14, 1 Peter 1:3-5**). There is no contradiction.

OSAS. Do We Have To Believe It To Be Saved?

Q. If someone believes that they can lose their salvation because of their behavior, are they saved? Though they claim the name of Christ and say they believe he is their Savior, their salvation is not really based on Jesus at all but on themselves. Aren't they are the ultimate savior of their souls and not Jesus? And though they say that Jesus died for their sins, wouldn't believing that you can lose your salvation because of something you did or did not do really be saying that because of sin you can go to hell? Thank you for any light you can shed on this. You are greatly appreciated.

A. In my mind this is a real conundrum. Like you, I think that if we believe we can lose our salvation because of our behavior then we have to believe the Lord's death might have been sufficient to save us initially, but it's not sufficient to keep us saved forever.

Since the Lord's death is a constant and our behavior is a variable we would in fact become responsible for maintaining our own salvation. We would have to be very careful to make sure that our behavior was always good enough to keep us saved, even though it wasn't good enough to save us in the first place. This violates a number of clear promises the Bible makes to the contrary. It would also allow all those who arrive in Heaven to say that they got there at least partially because of their own efforts, in spite of what Paul said in **Ephesians 2:8-9** about no one being able to boast.

So, does the Lord save us forever when we first ask, whether we believe it's guaranteed or not? Or, knowing that we don't believe it's guaranteed, does He not save us at all? We know He can't save us conditionally because of the promises of **Ephesians 1:13-14** and **2 Cor. 1:21-22**, which say that our inheritance is guaranteed from the moment we believe.

In **Matt. 7:7-8** Jesus said everyone who asks receives, and in **John 6:37** He said *“Whoever comes to me I will never drive away”* which says to me that once we ask Him to save us, He will never “unsave” us. So I would say that everyone who asks for salvation receives it and receives it forever no matter what they believe about eternal security, or (as is usually the case) even if they’ve never heard of it.

OSAS And The Mark Of The Beast

Q. I am a relatively new Christian and have been troubled by the conditional versus eternal salvation issue since the beginning of my walk. Your website has provided me with tremendous relief from this problem and I am very grateful. However, it was recently brought to my attention by an advocate of conditional salvation that during the end times, that a single sin could be eternally damning – taking the mark of the beast. What about Christians who, in a moment of fear and weakness, accept the mark of the beast? Will they be forgiven, or will they have forfeited their salvation by that one act?

A. Rev. 14:9-12 says that taking the mark of the beast is an act that carries eternal consequences and that anyone who does so is hopelessly lost.

But this cannot be used in the eternal security debate because it doesn't apply to the Church, since eternal security is promised only to believers during the Church Age. Old Testament saints didn't receive this assurance and neither will Tribulation believers. By the time the Mark of the Beast is required, the church will be long gone.

After all, how could God guarantee the inheritance of believers in **Ephesians 1:13-14, 2 Cor. 1:21-22** and other places and then tell them that taking the mark of the Beast will result in their salvation being revoked? He would have to break His own promise.

OSAS And The Two Phase Atonement

Q. I discovered a site that offers articles on Conditional Salvation and The Two-Phase Atonement. They claim “Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary was but the first half of the process, with the second phase still in the future. The sacrifice has been made, they say, and the blood has been shed, but the final atonement has not yet been made.

They also boast, regarding the article on Conditional Salvation, that “this article can give you many of the proofs you need to discuss this issue intelligently with others. The author, an attorney, proves beyond a reasonable doubt the falsity of the doctrine of unconditional eternal security.”

A. I’ve spent 25 years doing my own research and trust it to be conclusive. I’ve also had it confirmed by numerous scholars whose spiritual insight I respect, so I no longer spend time reading opinions that disagree with my findings. Lawyers are taught to prove true things false and false things true. That’s how innocent people wind up in jail and guilty people go free. All it takes to know that the Bible teaches the doctrine of Eternal Security is to believe God’s word.

When Jesus said, “*It is finished*” (**John 19:30**) he meant it is finished. All that’s left for us to do is to believe it (**John 3:16**). And when Paul said that God has accepted responsibility for us, put his seal of ownership on us and His spirit in us, to guarantee our inheritance (**2 Cor. 1:21-22**) he meant just that. No power in Heaven or on Earth can break that seal (**Romans 8:38-39**).

OSAS And The Church At Ephesus

Q. I scanned thru your library of articles in regards to the fate of the church at Ephesus in Rev 2. Historically it is known that the city and church by whatever means were destroyed. This seems to demonstrate Christ's promise of having its lamp stand removed. A friend of mine suggested that removal of the lamp stand symbolizes loss of salvation and supports the Arminian view of conditional security (which I don't subscribe to).

Physically we see that Ephesus is no longer. However what became of the spiritual fate of the Ephesus church? Does this mean the Ephesians lost the Holy Spirit (or have fallen away or have fallen from grace) and were all condemned to Hell because they didn't repent? Or is this in reference to inheritance and rewards that they blew (or never had)? Or is it something else?

A. To equate loss of the Ephesians' lamp stand with loss of their salvation is obviously a misuse of the letter's symbolism. **Revelation 1:20** says the lamp stands represent the churches the Lord is addressing, not the Holy Spirit. And Paul had earlier told the Ephesians that the Holy Spirit was sealed within them as a guarantee of their inheritance (**Ephes 1:13-14**).

The letter had nothing to do with the salvation of their members. The Lord was warning them that if they didn't abandon their religious works and return to expressing their love for Him as they had in the past with worship and adoration, their church would be disbanded. And so it was.

The warning to us is clear. If we think our ongoing relationship with the Lord is primarily dependent upon the good works we do, rather than the love we share, we're mistaken and are called to repent. The work that sustains our relationship with the Lord was finished at the cross (**John 19:30**). All that's left for us to do is express our gratitude in whatever way He calls us to do it.

OSAS And The Book Of Life

Q. I've noticed there have been a lot of questions regarding eternal security on your site as of late. Having come out of a very legalistic background, this has been an area of questioning for me. Reading the answers you have been giving people has helped me a lot with this.

Then today, I caught the tail end of a show on TV and the man was talking about where in the Bible it talks about The Lord removing names from The Book of Life. He said for a name to be removed, it had to be put there in the first place.

That got me to questioning again, somewhat. Does our name get put into The Book of Life at our salvation or is it there at our conception? When does a person's name get blotted out or removed? And what would cause The Lord to do that?

A. Many, myself included, believe that our names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundations of Earth were laid. **Rev. 13:8** and **Rev. 17:8** help to confirm this. The Lord, knowing the end from the beginning, knew all who would choose Him, and reserved a place for us in Heaven before He created Adam. But whenever He wrote them there, to blot them out again would mean that He's not all knowing and made a mistake in putting our names there in the first place. Crazy, huh?

That person was misquoting **Rev. 3:5** which says that the over comers will walk with the Lord dressed in white and He'll never blot our names out of the Book of Life. Earlier John had described overcomers as those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God. (**1 John 5:5**)

Rev. 3:5 is a promise straight from the Lord that if you believe in Him, He'll never blot your name out of the Book of Life.

OSAS And Sexual Sin

Q. I know you're a firm believer in OSAS. I had an uncle who preached the gospel in his church, led many to God over the years, had a great testimony in the church and community. Somewhere along the way he fell into a grievous sexual sin. He got found out, left the church, walked away from God. He made fun at those who continued to follow God. Are you telling me that he was saved and when he died he went to heaven?

A. It's not for me to say if your uncle was saved or not. But in two different places Paul said a believer's inheritance is guaranteed. In **Ephesians 1:13-14** he said the guarantee takes effect the moment we believe. In **2 Cor. 1:21-22** he said God anoints us, sets His seal of ownership on us and puts His spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. In **Colossians 2:13-14** he said Jesus forgave all our sins at the cross. That means each and every one of them.

Jesus promised not to lose any of those that God has given to Him (**John 6:39-40**) and He said no one can take us out of His or His Father's hands (**John 10:27-30**). In **Romans 8:38-39** Paul confirmed that means no one in heaven or on Earth. So, if you see your uncle in Heaven you'll know he was always saved, and if you don't, you'll know he never was.

OSAS And Exodus 32:33

Q. I highly appreciate your views to every question thrown upon you. In this regard, I would like also to have clear explanation regarding Exodus 32:30-33, most especially in verse 33, which says, "The LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book. How do you relate this verse to OSAS? I am a born again christian and I believe on OSAS, but there are times when I sin. Does that mean that whenever I commit a sin, my name is blotted out from the book of life, and when I repent it will be written again? Please explain.

A. You can't relate **Exodus 32:30-33** to OSAS because the promise of Eternal Security was given only to the Church. No group before or after the church has been or will be promised such a blessing. Also, the Book of Life spoken of in Exodus contains the name of everyone ever born (**Psalms 139:16**). Your name is also written in the Lamb's Book of Life which contains only the names of those in the Church (**Rev. 21:27**).

As part of the Church, all the sins of your life were forgiven at the cross (**Colossians 2:13-14**) and your salvation was guaranteed from the moment you believed (**Ephesians 1:13-14**). In fact God Himself will make you stand firm in Christ. He set His seal of ownership on you, and put His spirit in your heart to make sure of it (**2 Cor. 1:21-22**). Your name can never be blotted out of the Book of Life (**Rev. 3:5**).

OSAS And Ezekiel 18

Q. How do you interpret Ezekiel 18:24 in the light of OSAS? I believe fully that the saved person can't be lost, but wondered about this text. I have been greatly helped by your website, thank you very much.

A. Ezekiel 18:24 was written to Old Testament Israel and says:

But if a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin and does the same detestable things the wicked man does, will he live? None of the righteous things he has done will be remembered. Because of the unfaithfulness he is guilty of and because of the sins he has committed, he will die.

The Church is the only group in the history of man to be promised Eternal Security. Even the post church believers who will go through the Great Tribulation are not given this assurance, but must be responsible for their own faithfulness (**Rev. 14:12**).

Ezekiel 18 is God's response to Jews who claimed that they were being punished for the sins of their ancestors, not for their own, when God sent the Babylonians against them. He took the opportunity to state His views on personal responsibility, which can be summed up in verse 4:

The soul who sins is the one who will die.

But even then, everyone who came to the Temple with a sacrifice offered in faith of a coming Redeemer who would save them had their sins set aside.

One big difference between the Old and New covenants is that the Old Covenant sacrifice only covered past sins, while the New Covenant sacrifice covers future ones as well (**Hebrews 10:12-14**). Therefore, walking away from God's provisions for their sins canceled everything they had done in the past, and that's the point of verse 24. That can't happen to us.

OSAS And Matt. 7:21-23

Q. Please explain how OSAS and Matthew 7 verse 21 – 23 are different. Why do preachers use these verses to say if you are not living for the Lord and only the Lord knows your heart, then you may be headed for hell. And please help me understand how OSAS works, even for a Christian who is not living for the Lord.

A. First of all we have to understand that **Matt. 7:15-23** is about false prophets who are not believers and is not intended for general application. Also, it's not about living for the Lord. Nor is it about OSAS. It's about believing that His death paid the full price for our sins. We know this because in **Matt. 7:21** Jesus said that only those who do His Father's will can enter the kingdom. **John 6:38-40** tells us what His Father's will is:

For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

The Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life. A few verses earlier Jesus said that's all the Father requires of us (**John 6:28-29**). The same is true of **John 3:16**, **Ephesians 2:8-9**, **Titus 3:4-7** and others. Trusting fully and exclusively in the Lord's completed work on the cross is the only condition for salvation. Apart from that nothing will suffice, even the claim by those from **Matt. 7:21-23** that they had done miraculous work in His name. The fact that He said He never knew them (**Matt. 7:23**) means they had never believed in Him in the first place and were trying to enter the kingdom under false pretenses.

OSAS works like this. Belief in Him is the only requirement for salvation, and once we believe our salvation is guaranteed (**Ephesians 1:13-14**). God Himself has set His seal of ownership on us and placed His Spirit in our hearts to make sure of this (**2 Cor. 1:21-22**). No one can ever take us out of His hands (**John 10:27-30**) and nothing can ever separate us from Him (**Romans 8:38-39**).

The Bible is abundantly clear in saying it's what we believe that saves us, not how we behave. Our behavior is the way we demonstrate our gratitude for the free gift of salvation. It can do nothing to help us earn it or keep it.

OSAS And Luke 8:13

Q. I have yet another question regarding OSAS. I own a bible that has commentary from a well known preacher. I was reading through the book of Luke. In particular, my question is, what is your interpretation of Luke 8:13. The commentary from this preacher on this particular verse, states basically that this verse refutes the doctrine of unconditional eternal security.

A. As I've said before, the Bible being God's word cannot be inconsistent. It can't say one thing in one place and something else in another. If we come across a verse that seems to contradict several other clear verses then we have to assume that our interpretation of that verse is incorrect. And so it is with **Luke 8:13** which is a part of Luke's version of the Kingdom parables. Here's what it says:

Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away.

The analogy is to a seed that when sown lands on rocky ground where it can't take root so it soon dies for lack of water. This describes a person who in the passion of the moment is swept up in the gospel and may even respond to an altar call. But the gospel never takes root in the person's heart so when the first time of testing comes, the person quickly reverts back to his or her old ways. According to studies, this is the case with an overwhelming percentage of people who come forward at a revival or crusade where there's lots of emotion and excitement.

By comparing this with **Luke 8:15** where the word is received by a ready heart we can see that verse 13 describes a person who was never really saved in the first place.

OSAS And Luke 21

Q. How does Luke 21:34-36 stack up against OSAS? “And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”

A. Luke 21:34-36 is a confusing passage because there are two different translations of the Greek text. The version in the King James reads like this:

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

And Young's Literal Translation has it this way:

And take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts may be weighed down with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day may come on you, for as a snare it shall come on all those dwelling on the face of all the land, watch ye, then, in every season, praying that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are about to come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.'

For all practical purposes the only difference is the appearance of the word “about” in the Young's rendering of verse 36. (The New American Standard, the NIV and others follow the Young's, while the American Standard Version, Holman's Christian Standard and others are like the King James.)

The Greek word the King James translates shall come to pass means “to be about, or on the point of doing”. It implies immediacy. It’s just one word but it makes a lot of difference, since in **Luke 21** Jesus spoke about both the 1st Century destruction of Jerusalem and the Great Tribulation at the end of the age. Rather than try to figure out which version is correct, let’s look at it both ways.

If the version you read includes the word “about” in verse 36 then you have a summary statement with final instructions for the early church. Jesus said these things in 32 AD. The Great Tribulation wasn’t about to happen, but the destruction of Jerusalem, of which He had just spoken, was (**Luke 21:12-24**). That’s what He would have been warning them about. There was no promise that the Church would be removed from harm’s way before the Roman armies came. They were going to have to stay alert and live by faith to escape with their lives.

If your version does not include the word about, then you would see verses 34-36 as applying to the end of the age and that’s where the problem comes in. Many read it this way and think it has to do with the rapture. But that’s an incorrect interpretation.

First of all, **Luke 21:34-36** is all about behavior so you have to ask yourself, “What makes a Church age believer worthy to stand before the Son of Man?” Clearly it’s belief (**John 3:16, Romans 10:9, Romans 10:13**, etc.) not behavior.

Second, since our salvation is guaranteed from the moment of belief (**Ephes. 1:13-14**) and there’s nothing we can do to change that (**John 6:38-40, John 10:27-30**) then the Lord couldn’t have been talking about the Church in this passage. We’re already worthy because we have a righteousness imputed to us by faith (**Romans 3:21-22**).

But salvation will not be guaranteed to tribulation believers. They’ll be responsible for remaining faithful (**Rev. 14:12**). Since the context of the preceding verses (**Luke 21:25-33**) is obviously the time of the 2nd Coming the rapture will have already taken place, so absent the word “about” the Lord would have had Tribulation believers in mind here and not the Church.

The bottom line is, whether you prefer the “about” version or the “shall” version, neither of them can refer to the rapture of the church.

OSAS And John 5:1-15

Q. In John chapter 5 after Jesus healed the man with the infirmity, he said "...: sin no more...". I believe in OSAS, but I have a friend that takes this to mean if you continue to sin after being saved you can lose your salvation. You have to live a holy life to keep your salvation, which I do not believe. But, what exactly did Jesus mean when he said "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee", because sinning no more is just not humanly possible. Please explain.

A. There is no reason to interpret **John 5:14** as Jesus telling this man he could lose his salvation. In **John 3:16**, **John 5: 24**, **John 6:28-29**, **John 6:37-40** and **John 10:27-30** Jesus made it clear that we are saved by believing that He came to die for our sins, that this belief is the only thing God requires of us, that He will never drive us away or lose us, and that no one can take us out of His hands. For your friend to be correct, **John 5:14** would have to contradict all these other statements the Lord made.

According to some accounts of **John 5:1-15**, people believed that an angel would periodically come and stir up the waters of the pool of Bethesda. The first one into the pool when this happened would be healed. Translations that don't include this explanation eliminate verse 4 from the text but may mention it as a foot note. This explains why a great number of disabled people gathered there (**John 5:3**).

The lesson of **John 5:1-15** is that the crippled man was relying on a religious tradition for healing rather than the One who could heal him. Attributing the work of God to anyone or anything other than Him is a sin that can put us out of fellowship with God and expose us to the enemy's mischief. This is what the Lord was telling the man to stop doing because, as you have said, it's impossible for man to stop sinning altogether.

OSAS And John 15:1-6

Q. My question is about John 15:1-6. In v.2 there are some who are connected to Jesus but if no fruit is a result they are taken away. Who are taken away because I believe OSAS? I understand abiding should be our response to the gift of life given to us, but what is meant in v6. If anyone does not abide in me he is cast out as a branch and is withered, and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. Who are the ones cast out and burned since in v.2 states they are apparently in Jesus?

A. Because of other statements Jesus made about salvation (**John 3:16, John 6:28-29**) and security (**John 6:38-40 John 10:27-30**) we can tell **John 15:1-6** is not about either. In **John 15:3** Jesus said:

You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

That means they were already saved. Then He went on to speak about bearing fruit. It's important to understand that salvation is not a fruit bearing fruit event. It's what you do after you're saved that determines whether you're fruitful.

Jesus explained that believers can only bear fruit if they remain in Him, that apart from Him we can do nothing (**John 15:5**). That means the things we do have to be at His request and in His strength to have value to Him. Things we do on our own have no value. They're like a withered branch that is burned in the fire. So this passage is not about whether we can lose our salvation. It's about whether the things we do as believers have value to Him or not. Otherwise Jesus would have been contradicting His earlier statements.

Paul explained this in **1 Cor. 3:10-15** saying some of our work is like gold, silver, and precious gems. This is the work we do in the Lord's strength and has much value. Other work is like wood, hay, and straw. This is the work we do in our own strength and has no value. In **1 Cor. 3:15** Paul said even if all our work is burned up, we'll still be saved.

So, as you can see there's no connection between OSAS and fruitfulness. That's because it's our belief that saves us, not our behavior. Unfruitful believers may not receive crowns or other heavenly rewards, but they cannot lose their salvation.

OSAS And Romans 11:22

Q. A teacher used Romans 11:22 defending the statement that to remain saved we must follow the commandments or be cut off. He also cites James 2:14 and 24-26 to back this up. And if we commit "Deadly Sins" our souls are dead and a person is not saved anymore. I understand John 3:16 but there seems to be (in my mind) a contradiction. This topic really bothered me when I read it, and I almost feel like it is going to come down my individual interpretation.

A. I don't know who you're referencing, but he sure got **Romans 11:22** wrong. In fact it means the exact opposite of what you wrote. God's kindness is not found in giving us impossible commandments to keep, it's His Grace, and we have to continue in His grace to be saved. Once we begin working for our salvation, we show that we never believed in salvation by grace, and that means we were never saved.

In **James 2:14** we're told that true faith will produce works of gratitude. In the examples of Abraham and Rahab in verses 24-26, James was showing that very point. Their works were the result of their faith, not its cause. If that's not true then James was disputing Paul, who used the same quote to support salvation by faith alone. (**Romans 4:1-5**) The Holy Spirit, who inspired both writers, cannot contradict himself.

And I guess it goes without saying that all sins are deadly. (**James 2:10**)

OSAS And Romans 11

Q. Thank you so much for your website and ministry to the Lord. It is definitely a blessing from God.

I believe once saved, always saved, and I've read your comments concerning the same. I think you do a wonderful job explaining OSAS in them.

The one thing that came to my mind when reading them though, and I didn't see any comments on, but maybe I just missed it, was how Romans 11:17-24 plays into OSAS, if at all. Could and would you please shed some light on this for me?

A. The point of **Romans 11:17-24** is belief by faith. The Jews relied on their heritage and their works to win God's favor. Neither is acceptable and they were like dead branches, broken off from the root. Gentiles are grafted in by faith and sustained by the root.

But if a Gentile tries to be grafted in because he thinks he's replaced the Jews, or because of his good works, he'll be broken off just like the Jews were. Conversely, if a Jew comes by faith he can be grafted in again. Salvation can only be achieved through faith in the Lord's completed work, whether we're Jew or Gentile.

OSAS And 1 Cor. 6:9-10

Q. Your website and the answers have been a blessing. I do have a question about 1 Cor. 6:9-10. It says I shall not inherit the kingdom of God if I do any of those things. What happens to OSAS if I steal something and die before I confess?

A. The summary statement of the passage is “The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” The rest of verses 9-10 describe types of unrighteous people.

Look at **Romans 3:21-22**:

But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

And **2 Cor. 5:21**:

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

We are made righteous because of our faith, as righteous as God is. That’s because when Jesus went to the cross He took every sin of our lives, past present and future, and paid the penalty for all of them (**Col. 2:13-15**). We are no longer considered by God to be unrighteous, and there is no sin we can commit to make us so, because Jesus has already made atonement for every sin of our life.

Confessing our sins, as required by **1 John 1:9**, is not for the purpose of maintaining our salvation, which affects our eternal life. It’s to maintain our fellowship with God, which affects our earthly life. Otherwise even an angry or resentful thought (which are also sins) conceived at the moment of death, could deprive us of our salvation just as surely as if we’d committed a physical act of sin.

Ephesians 1:13-14 explain that our inheritance is guaranteed the moment we place our faith in the Lord. And the Holy Spirit is sealed within us at that point as a deposit. The only way God could do this is if all the sins of our remaining life had been paid for in

advance.

OSAS And 1 Cor. 6:9-10 Follow

Up

Q. I have problems with OSAS, because I believe that if a person chooses to live in deliberate sin, he has to repent of it before he can be raptured. For example, our daughter, who we believe was saved—she'd loved Jesus since age 3-4, was baptized by immersion-at her own request- at 8, wanted to be a missionary, going on 3 short-term mission trips—has become a liberal in every sense, is committed to a long-term lesbian relationship, considering herself married. We love her, of course, but have difficulty in believing she will go with us in the rapture of the church based on our understanding of 1 Cor. 6:9-10, which says in part that homosexuals cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Wouldn't our daughter need a time of purification— with repentance— before she could inherit the Kingdom?

A. Unless you can show me some Biblical support for your position I'll assume you're speaking out of your disappointment in your daughter's behavior rather than your knowledge of God's word. I've heard lots of people in your situation quote **1 Cor. 6:9-10** to justify their position. But they always stop short of completing Paul's thought by leaving out verse 11, which says;

“And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” Notice Paul said, “That's what some of you were” meaning before they were washed, sanctified and justified, or in other words purified.

Taking all of Paul's epistles into consideration shows all of our sins (all means each and every, the whole) were forgiven at the cross (**Colossians 2:13-14**), that our salvation was assured from the time we believed (**Ephesians 1:13-14**), that God Himself took ownership of us at that time and sent His spirit to dwell in us as a deposit guaranteeing this (**2 Cor. 1:21-22**), that He sees us as a new creation in Christ (**2 Cor 5:17**) and no longer attributes our sins to us but to the sin that lives in us (**Romans 7:18-20**), and that at the rapture we'll all be changed from corruptible to incorruptible (**1 Cor. 15:51-53**).

All this should neither be seen as a license to sin nor as an admonition to approve of any and all types of behavior from others. Rather it should be received as a recognition that we're all sinners of one sort or another, and that our sins have been forgiven and will not prevent us from participating in the rapture.

We are saved because of what we believe, not because of how we behave.

OSAS And 1 Cor. 9:25-27

Q. I disagree with this idea of once saved forever saved. In 1 Cor.9:27 the Apostle Paul wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” How do we explain the word castaway? Paul knew that he was saved, if you are correct, how could Paul be a castaway?

A. Paul also wrote that when we first believed, we received the seal of the Holy Spirit as a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance (**Ephes. 1:13-14**), and that God has taken ownership of us and it's He who makes us stand, (**2 Cor. 1:21-22**). Since, as you said, he was writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit then how could he contradict himself like this?

The Greek word translated castaway means not standing the test, or being disqualified. The only test for salvation is belief (**John 3:16, John 6:28-29. John 6:40**) and the only way to be disqualified is to refuse to believe (**John 3:18, 2 Thes. 2:9-10**).

In the context of **1 Cor. 9:25-27** Paul compared a believer's life to an athlete's attempts to achieve victory in a race. Both involve bringing one's body into subjection. This is not a precondition for salvation, but a way to achieve victory over the flesh after we've been saved. Therefore this verse is not about salvation, but about living a victorious Christian life.

In **1 Cor. 3:15** Paul wrote that even if all our human works are burned up in the fire we'll still be saved. In other words, even if all our attempts to put our body under subjection result in defeat rather than victory our salvation will not be affected.

OSAS And 1 Cor. 15:2

Q. I cling to every “Once Saved Always Saved” email you send, but sometimes the thought of having lost my salvation is crippling. What do you say to the meaning of 1 Corinthians 15:2: “By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.”

A. Paul explained his point in **1 Cor. 15:3-4** by reminding them of the word he preached to them:

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

This is the gospel to which we must hold firm. We must believe that Jesus died for all our sins and rose again on the 3rd day. The reason this is so important is that Jesus took all our sins upon Himself (According to **2 Cor. 5:21** He was made sin for us) and then rose again to be seated at the right hand of God. Nothing sinful can exist in the presence of God, so if any of our sins still remained on Jesus, He couldn't be seated at God's right hand. His resurrection is our proof that every one of our sins was paid for at the cross. If we don't believe that we've believed in vain, because there is no other remedy for our sins. Either we believe they were all paid for at the cross or else we're not saved.

OSAS And Galatians 5:19-21

Q. I have read your articles, and replies to questions, with regard to Eternal Security. I find the evidence for OSAS quite substantial. But I'm having trouble slotting Galatians 5:19-21 into the equation. If those being addressed are believers, how can they be told that such cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, if they were sealed with the Holy Spirit at the time when they accepted Jesus?

A. Galatians 5:16-26 concerns the ongoing conflict between the indwelling Holy Spirit and our sin nature, and needs to be viewed as a whole.

Following the overview in verses 16-18, verses 19-21 contain a partial list of behavior Paul called acts of the sinful nature. The key to this portion is the phrase "those who live like this" in verse 21. In effect, it means that while everyone manifests one or more of these characteristics on occasion, people whose lives are characterized by this kind of behavior are giving evidence that they're not saved and therefore won't inherit the Kingdom.

Then in verses 22-23 he offered a partial list of behavior he called the fruit of the spirit. Again, everyone manifests this kind of behavior occasionally, but those whose lives are characterized by it are giving evidence that their behavior is being governed by the Holy Spirit who comes to dwell with in us at the moment of salvation.

Here's the point of the passage. The New Testament makes it very clear that we're saved because of what we believe, not because of how we behave. (**John 3:16**) The indwelling Holy Spirit is a result of our belief and manifesting His fruit is evidence of that result.

But evidence is not the same as proof, and we're admonished to not make judgments about others (**1 Cor. 4:5**). In his summary, verses 25-26, Paul said that we should observe our own behavior to determine how faithfully we're following the Holy Spirit's counsel, and not compare ourselves to, or be critical of, others.

OSAS And Galatians 5:19-21

Follow Up

Q. In your response entitled [OSAS and Galatians 5:19-21](#) you state that “people who live like this are giving evidence that they are not saved and therefore won’t inherit the Kingdom.” I received Christ as my Savior trusting his death and resurrection to pay the penalty for my sins before I went to college. But once I went to college I began drinking excessively and partying. I would try to compartmentalize my behavior and live a “Christian” life except for my drinking, but that as you know that is impossible. My question is then, since my life was “characterized” by this behavior and this was occurring nearly every weekend where do I stand as far as Galatians and your comment about it? I have confessed my sin since I left college. It took awhile to break free from excessive drinking but I have recommitted myself to Christ since then, however sometimes I still have doubts about my forgiveness and my standing before the Lord.

A. By reading **Ephesians 1:13-14** and **2 Corinthians 1:21-22** you can see that your salvation was guaranteed from the moment you first believed. Your college days were a lapse in behavior but not in belief, which is the basis for your salvation (**1 Cor. 15:1-4**). What you’ve described of your behavior doesn’t fit the definition of being “characterized by drinking and partying” since you indicated you were also striving to live a Christian life during that time and your partying was only on the weekends. You sound more like a typical college kid than a habitual drunk.

If you have asked God to forgive you for the excessive drinking, He has done so and has purified you from all unrighteousness (**1 John 1:9**). But since it appears you’re still feeling guilt about those days maybe you haven’t forgiven your self.

OSAS And Galatians 6

Q. Does Galatians 6:7-9 contradict the “once saved always saved” belief? I may just be misinterpreting but it seems to me that when you consider the word “if” in verse 9 it implies that our eternal salvation is contingent on our behavior i.e “not give up” or “lose heart”.

A. Galatians 6:7-9 says:

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

The Bible, being the word of God, cannot contradict itself, so when it appears to be doing so we know it must be either a translation problem or an interpretation problem. With so many very clear passages confirming OSAS, many of them written by Paul, we have to interpret questionable ones like the ones you’ve cited in light of them.

For example, in **Ephesians 1:13-14** Paul said our salvation was granted at the moment we first believed and at that time we were marked with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance. Then in **Ephesians 2:8-9** he said we are saved by grace through faith, and not by works. It doesn’t make sense that this same writer would tell the Galatians that their salvation would ultimately depend on continuing to do good and could be taken away.

We can determine the context of a given passage by reading several verses either side of it. All of **Galatians 5** consists of an admonition not to fall back under the law and **Gal 6:11-16** are a final warning against it. Claiming to be saved by grace and then going back under the law is what Paul meant by mocking God in **Gal. 6:7**. In verse 8 he said doing so is an effort to satisfy their sinful nature and will bring them to ruin.

Since a person who is saved cannot fall back under the law, the implication is that those who do so aren't really saved. This interpretation is consistent with Paul's other statements on the subject. So the phrase "doing good" in verse 9 has to apply to living by faith not by works. Finally in **Gal. 6:12** Paul warned the Galatians that those who want to make a good impression outwardly were trying to compel them to be circumcised. Obeying the Law can make a person appear "good" to others but only God can determine the motives of his heart. This confirms that the issue bracketing **Gal. 6:7-9** is grace vs. law.

It's interesting that you should mention the word "if". Although it appears 292 times in the New Testament, **Galatians 6:9** is not one of them. The translators implied it to make the sentence read better in English. I'm not enough of a Greek scholar to know whether the use of "if" is appropriate or not, but I do know that it's often used when something is generally assumed to be the case. Some scholars have used the word "since" in it's place.

OSAS And Phil. 2:12

Q. Re: Phil. 2:12-13

“Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose”.

I read an article where the author uses these verses to deny OSAS. He agrees we are saved by grace and cannot earn or deserve our salvation. But we must do our part to receive and keep it, or else we'll lose it.

A. How could Paul tell the Philippians they have to work to maintain their salvation when he had already told the Ephesians (**Ephes 1:13-14**) and the Corinthians (**2 Cor. 1:21-22**) that their salvation was guaranteed from the moment they believed. Earlier in the Philippian letter he said that God is faithful to carry to completion the good work he began in us (**Phil. 1:6**). We didn't begin the work, He did. We don't carry it to completion, He does. What Paul was saying there is right now salvation is a promise God has given us. We can trust Him because He's faithful to turn the promise into reality.

Phil 2:12 is part of a passage where the context is imitating the Lord's humility. In **Phil 2:5-11** He said Jesus was God in the flesh, but made himself as humble as a servant, even forfeiting His own life because His Father asked Him to. In that context **Phil 2:12** is saying that if He who had everything could do that, how much more should we who have nothing come to Him in deep humility, with fear and trembling, because we know we don't deserve what we're asking for. **Phil. 2:13** tells us even the act of asking for salvation is due to God working in us to act according to His purpose. We can't take credit for anything. In that context, how could Paul have possibly been saying that we have to work to finish the job God only began? Because if that was the case we'd be able to take credit for our own salvation.

OSAS And Colossians 1:21-23

Q. I love the OSAS view but it would seem that Paul's statement in Colossians 1:21-23 is a proof-text against the notion that it is impossible to forfeit your own salvation through disbelief. It seems that there is no way to tie this statement of Paul's to rewards rather than to salvation. Can you help here?

A. Here's **Colossians 1:21-23**:

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel.

Taken by itself you could read this as a conditional statement. But for that to be correct, Paul would have to be contradicting clear statements he made confirming OSAS in other places. Some of these are **Romans 8:38-39**, **Ephesians 1:13-14**, and **2 Cor 1:21-22**. Since his writings were inspired by the Holy Spirit (**2 Tim. 3:16**), this would not be possible. So what is **Colossians 1:21-23** really saying?

The Greek word translated "if" in **Col 1:23** is *eige*. It doesn't have a direct equivalent in English. According to my concordance the word "since" and the phrase "inasmuch as" come close. We give the word "if" that kind of certainty when we make an if/then statement.

For example, suppose I say, "If gravity exists, then by jumping off a building you will fall to the ground." Does my use of the word "if" imply that gravity is conditional? Or, am I really saying, "Since gravity exists, then by jumping off a building you will fall to the ground." See what I mean? Substituting "since" for "if" removes any possibility of **Colossians 1:21-23** contradicting Paul's other statements.

OSAS And 1 Tim 4:1

Q. Re: 1 Timothy 4:1. "The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons." Since you teach eternal security can you please explain this scripture above? The people it refers to must have been in the faith (or believed) to be able to abandon their faith. In my thinking, you can't abandon something you don't have to begin with. Am I wrong in thinking this?

A. Your assumption that people must have been in the faith to abandon it is not correct.

In **Matt. 7:22-23** Jesus said that He'll deny ever knowing some of those who prophesy in His name and drive out demons and perform miracles. And referring to false teachers John said:

They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us (**1 John 2:19**).

In **John 10:27-30** Jesus said:

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.

By these statements we learn that even some who claim to be believers will turn out not to be. But those who truly are believers cannot abandon the faith or be lost, so the ones who abandon the faith were never really in it. **Ephesians 1:13-14, 2 Cor. 1:21-22** and numerous other verses confirm His promise that once we believe in Him our salvation is guaranteed and nothing can change that.

OSAS And 1 Tim. 4:16

Q. Could you please explain the significance of 1 Tim 4:16, to OSAS? In this verse, it seems Paul is speaking to those in ministry, and it does appear he is saying that they must make certain they keep their own salvation as well as that of those they are teaching by what they are teaching. It would seem from what is being said in previous verses that these leaders are saved, but could be in danger of losing it (salvation) through wrong teaching, as well as their recipients not receiving it. If anyone can give a clear understanding and clarity to this, I believe you can.

A. Here's what **1 Tim. 4:16** says:

Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

If you were to read this verse in a vacuum, you could make such an assumption. But no statement in the New Testament (especially not one of Paul's) can contradict his promises of eternal security for Church Age believers (**2 Cor. 1:21-22**, **2 Cor. 5:5**, **Ephesians 1:13-14**). These verses make it clear that having already been saved, Timothy could not be in danger of losing his salvation if he didn't adhere to correct teaching.

Therefore, **1 Tim. 4:16** has to be understood as Paul telling Timothy that if he watched his doctrine carefully the end result would not only be saving himself (already happened) but also those he would be teaching (going to happen). I think Paul was stressing the importance of adhering to correct doctrine in assuring a fruitful career, rather than warning him that the failure to do so could endanger his salvation.

This is good advice for all pastors and teachers, and goes along with Paul's admonition to present ourselves to God as workmen approved, who do not need to be ashamed of the way we've handled His word (**2 Tim. 2:15**).

OSAS And 1 Timothy 6:6-10

Q. Does 1 Tim 6:10 have anything to do with one's salvation? " For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs."

A. Paul stated very clearly stated that our salvation is guaranteed from the moment we first believe (**Ephes. 1:13-14, 2 Cor. 1:21-22**) and nothing can ever separate us from God (**Romans 8:38-39**). Therefore **1 Tim. 6:10** can't be about losing one's salvation.

Paul began this train of thought in **1 Tim. 6:6**, saying as long as we have enough to get by on we should be content. After all we didn't bring anything into the world and we won't take anything out of it (verses 6-8).

Then he mentioned two kinds of people. In verse 9 he said the pursuit of wealth has brought some to ruin and destruction. Based on his belief in eternal security he had to be referring to those whose pursuit of wealth kept them from making a commitment to the Lord so they were never really saved in the first place. They may become wealthy in this life but they'll spend eternity in torment.

The second group is the topic of verse 10. There he had believers who fail to submit to the Lord's will for their lives in mind. These believers choose to live secular lives focused only on acquiring the things this world has to offer. In the end they will still be saved but will regret having lived totally fruitless lives where the Kingdom is concerned. The Lord spoke of these believers in the parable of the sower and the seed (**Matt. 13:22**). This is why He cautioned us not to store up treasure on Earth, but focus on storing up treasure in Heaven (**Matt. 6:19-21**).

OSAS And Hebrews 6:4-6

Q. In Hebrews 6:4-6 it says "For concerning those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance; seeing they crucify the Son of God for themselves again, and put him to open shame." Does this mean people can lose their salvation? If not, what does it mean?

A. There are two facets to our relationship with God. There is union, which happens at the moment of salvation and guarantees our eternity with Him (**Ephes. 1:13-14**) and there is fellowship, the ability to dwell in His presence and communicate with Him in the here and now. Union is based on our belief and fellowship is based on our behavior.

The context of **Hebrews 6** is interrupting our fellowship with God, not breaking our union. The key is the phrase "renew again to repentance." Jewish believers were being pressured into keeping the law, especially where it concerned the daily sacrifice for sin. Those who relied on the daily sacrifice instead of invoking **1 John 1:9** (confessing directly to God) were in effect crucifying the Lord all over again, since He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. The daily sacrifice was a foreshadowing of Him, and when He came the shadow gave way to the reality. The old way was no longer sufficient to restore them to fellowship (**Hebr. 10:1-18**).

Since **1 John 1:9** says that confession brings forgiveness and purification from all unrighteousness (renewal again to repentance), then by implication anything other than confessing our sins prevents forgiveness and purification and causes estrangement from God. It doesn't revoke our salvation, but because God can't be in the presence of sin, it does suspend our relationship, depriving us of blessings we could have otherwise had.

There are many clear verses that unequivocally promise eternal security. Since the Bible cannot contradict itself and still be the Word of God, interpreting **Hebrews 6** as having anything to do with salvation is a violation of the rules of interpretation, which teaches that we're to use clear verses to interpret obscure ones, not the other way around.

OSAS And Hebrews 10:26-29

Q. I have a question on Hebrews 10:26-29. I was brought up to believe in “once saved, always saved”, yet this scripture would make someone think that salvation could be lost.

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. Anyone who has rejected Moses' law will die without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace.

I am new to your site, but you seem to have some pretty knowledgeable things to say. Please clear this one up for me.

A. Let's review the concept of OSAS. The Bible clearly tells us that at the moment we first believed, we were given the seal of the Holy Spirit as a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance. This confirms that our salvation is assured (**Ephes. 1:13-14**). Paul confirmed this in **2 Cor. 1:21-22** adding that God has taken ownership of us and it is He who makes us stand firm in Christ. The Bible also says that we're saved by faith alone, not by works (**Ephes. 2:8-9**). So the basis for our salvation is belief, not behavior, and it's guaranteed right from the start. This is possible because all the sins of our life were forgiven at the cross (**Colossians 2:13-14**).

These are incredibly clear statements on the unconditional and durable nature of our salvation, and form the foundation for the OSAS view. To deny OSAS you have to believe that other statements in the Bible can rescind or contradict these promises. That means you believe that either God wasn't sincere when He had Paul make them, or that He let Paul make a promise in His name that isn't true, or that He changed His mind and revoked them.

Now let's look at your quote from **Hebrews 10:26-29**. If the writer was referring to our salvation then the first phrase of that passage has disqualified everyone who has ever lived from ever going to Heaven because no Christian has ever lived a sin free life.

Even the mighty Paul confessed that he couldn't keep himself from sinning. (**Romans 7:18-20**). The Apostle John agreed.

"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives. (**1 John 1:8-10**)

Both were writing to the Church, not to unbelievers.

Finally, look at the context in which the Hebrews passage was given. The whole letter is an argument against the tendency of Jewish believers to go back into the Levitical system, which required the sacrifice of a Lamb as the remedy for sin. Statements both before and after the passage you quoted confirm the confidence we have that Jesus paid the whole price for all the sins of our lives. He is the Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world (**John 1:29**) once and for all (**Hebrews 10:12-14**).

Hebrews 10:19-23 says:

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

And **Hebrews 10:35-36** says:

So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

Jesus said that the will of God is that everyone Who looks to the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life. (**John 6:40**)

Put it all together and you can see that **Hebrews 10:26-29** says that there's no longer any acceptable sacrifice for sin in the Levitical system, and that looking for one is a sin that has the effect of "trampling the Son of God underfoot, counting the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulting the Spirit of grace," and that going back to the Law of Moses after Jesus had come to fulfill it was a worse insult to God than disobeying it before He came.

Under the New Covenant the remedy for sin is **1 John 1:9**:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Failure to confess our sins gives us no release from the guilt we feel for sinning. Over the years this guilt builds up into a "fearful expectation" of judgment, which is what **Hebr. 10: 27** actually says. It's not that we'll wind up being treated like God's enemies, because that would violate all the promises God has made to us. But the guilt we feel for all our sins will make us fearful that it could happen.

I can't tell you how many people have expressed this fear to me. Having built up a mountain of guilt due to a lifetime of unconfessed sins they've become convinced that there's no way God could save them from the judgment they deserve. Of course, He will keep His promise and save them, but in the mean time they live in constant fear that He won't.

OSAS And Hebrews 10:36

Q. I'm having some trouble with Hebrews 10:36. We know that the will of God is to believe on His Son, and the promise is eternal life. I believe OSAS, but I'm having trouble reconciling this verse.

A. It helps our understanding to take the entire passage of **Hebrews 10:35-39** in context:

So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while,

“He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.” (**Habakkuk 2:3-4**)

But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.

The letter to the Hebrews was written to encourage Jewish believers to resist going back under the law and to fully entrust their salvation to the Lord's once for all time sacrifice. Speaking of that sacrifice the writer said, “*So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.*”

The perseverance he spoke next of concerns living by faith, which is God's will for us. **John 6:40** says:

For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

Then the writer quoted from **Habakkuk 2:3-4** to underscore the fact that God wants us to live by faith. And finally he confirmed that going back under the law instead of living by faith indicates that a person who does so was not really saved in the first place.

OSAS And James 2:17-19

Q. I have a question regarding OSAS. Where do the scriptures regarding “faith without works are dead” and “you say you believe, the devil believes also and trembles” come in? To me they are saying that only belief is required for the initial act of receiving salvation, but after having received salvation there are expectations that must be met in order to maintain it. In other words you can’t just say I believe and let it go at that. I’m just trying to piece all this together and get a correct understanding. Your assistance is very much appreciated.

A. Either your position is not consistent with Scripture, or Jesus wasn’t being completely forthright when He was asked what work God requires of us. He said,

“The work of God is this: to believe in the one He sent” (**John 6:28-29**).

The phrases you quoted are from from **James 2**. In the one about demons believing there is one God and trembling, James was referring to the fact that demons believe there’s one God because they’ve seen Him. But since they didn’t accept them as their savior, all they can look forward to is His wrath. That’s why they tremble. It’s not enough to believe that there’s a God. You have to believe that He died for your sins.

When He said that faith without works is dead, he meant that true faith will prompt us to do good things out of gratitude for what we’ve been given. The Holy Spirit, who dwells within us motivates us to do these things. So we don’t just say “I believe” and let it go at that. That’s the point.

While we’re admonished to behave in a manner that pleases God as a way of demonstrating our gratitude, nowhere does the Bible tell us that certain expectations must be met in order to maintain our salvation. The very idea negates the Doctrine of Grace and is a case of man trying to justify himself before God, to somehow prove that he deserved to be saved. Remember this simple formula. Faith plus work equals work (**Romans 4:4-5**). Our position before God is maintained by our faith, not our works.

OSAS And James 5:19-20

Q. I have a question about James 5:19-20. It would seem to indicate that someone could taste death by their sinning. In other words, if the person wasn't turned away from their sin, they would taste death. Yet I know that we are forgiven when we ask. How does this get rectified?

A. Since the Bible is clear in saying that as soon as we believe our inheritance is guaranteed (**Ephes. 1:13-14**) then the person James was referring to could not have been really saved. He might have been part of the fellowship but had wandered off before becoming born again. There are many around us who attend church regularly and appear to be part of us but are not really born again. Bringing such people back to complete their salvation saves them from death and covers all their sins.

Remember, Jesus said that whoever believes in Him will not perish but will have everlasting life (**John 3:16**). He also said even if a believer experiences physical death, he or she will live (**John 11:25**) referring to eternal life. James could not have said anything to contradict this.

OSAS And 2 Peter 1:5-10

Q. In 2 Peter 1:5-10, Peter says to make your calling and election sure by growing in your faith so one does not “fall away”. Does this mean I could lose my salvation?

A. There are too many verses that clearly say we can't lose our salvation for Peter to be speaking about this. A careful reading of verse 8 shows that his warning is against being ineffective and unproductive in our Christian life. Verse 9 confirms this, saying it's possible to actually forget we've been cleansed from our sins. This doesn't mean we've lost the cleansing, but that we act like we never received it.

So **2 Peter 1:5-10** is not a warning against losing our salvation, but against falling back into the lifestyle we lived before becoming saved. According to recent polls over 90% of those who profess Christianity live lives that are indistinguishable from their unbelieving counterparts. By failing to add goodness, knowledge, self control and the other qualities Peter mentioned to their faith, they've become just like the people around them. They haven't lost their salvation but their lives are devoid of any evidence of their beliefs.

Jesus spoke of these people in His parable of the sower and the seed. He said they're like the seed that fell among thorns who let the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth make them unfruitful (**Matt. 13:22**). When they get to heaven they'll have nothing to commend them. Like the one whose works are all burned up in the fire, they'll still be saved but only as one escaping through the flames (**1 Cor. 3:15**).

Finally, the Greek wording of verse 10 does not include “apostasia” which means “to fall away.” The word used there is “ptaio” which means “to stumble” or “make a mistake”. Peter was admonishing us to be diligent in our walk with the Lord to guard against living an unfruitful life.

OSAS And 2 Peter 2:20-21

Q. Can you please help me understand 2 Peter 2:20-21 and how it lines up with OSAS?

A. **2 Peter 2:20-21** reads:

If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.

The context of **2 Peter 2** is false teachers and their destruction. From other clear passages explaining the certainty of our salvation and the Lord's commitment not to lose even one of us, we can conclude that those Peter refers to are not and never were saved. Knowing the Lord and knowing the way of righteousness does not mean that a person has believed in his or her heart. The Greek words used there are all forms of gnosis, which means to know. The Greek word for believe is not related to the word for knowledge, and it doesn't appear anywhere in the passage.

Those Peter is describing have learned enough to be teachers, but haven't believed what they've learned and are actually leading their students astray. Peter said it would be better for them if they had remained ignorant. As Jesus said to the Pharisees:

If you were blind you would not be guilty of sin, but now that you claim to see your sin remains. (**John 9:41**)

Speaking about false teachers John said:

They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us(**1 John 2:19**).

OSAS And 2 Peter 3:17

Q. Just when I think I have finally understood and accepted OSAS, someone comes along and throws me a curve ball and steals my joy. Please help me understand 2 Peter 3:17, as that is the most recent curve ball thrown at me!!!

Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position.
—2 Peter 3:17

A. The Bible being the word of God cannot contradict itself. God doesn't say something in one place and then something different in another. Therefore you can't take one verse whose meaning is not clear to you and use it to negate all the others whose meanings are. There are a dozen or so clear verses on Eternal Security. Two of the clearest are **Ephesians 1:13-14** and **2 Cor. 1:21-22**. I suggest you study them until you understand them fully and can repeat them from memory. Then when someone throws you a curve ball you can compare what they give you with what you know to be true.

Peter was speaking of false teachers who cause people to doubt their faith. They would sow confusion among the people by claiming to know things the people hadn't heard before. A couple of verses earlier Peter had said that he and Paul were in agreement on the matter of salvation, and these teachers were distorting what they both taught. In verse 17 Peter said in effect, "you already know the truth so don't let the errors in this false teaching cause you to doubt your security in the Lord." In verse 18 he gave us the same advice I just gave you. "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Knowledge is the best defense against error.

OSAS And 1 John

Q. Your articles on eternal security were such a blessing to me. I am still wrestling w/ some vital concerns however. You stated in several of your articles the believer's behavior will not negate his or her salvation. But there are several verses in 1 John which seem to indicate to the contrary. For instance, chapter 3 vs:9 says anyone born of God will not continue to sin because God's seed remains in him, he cannot continue to sin! There are several others as well.

Coming out of a denomination that stressed grace/ works and struggling with sin as a believer, I want with all my heart to embrace what you're teaching! My sanity and marriage depend on it. Please keep serving our precious Lord by helping to liberate multitudes in bondage to legalism and rules and commandments taught by men!

A. Let's apply some simple logic here. Consider these two points.

1. If the believer's security is not eternal, how can God guarantee our inheritance from the moment we first believed in places like **Ephesians 1:13-14**, and claim that it's He who makes us stand firm in **2 Cor. 1:21** and then repeat the promise of **Ephesians 1** in the very next verse? And how can he claim that once He has his hands on us then no one can snatch us away from Him? (**John 10:27-29**)

2. Almost everyone agrees that John wrote his letters to believers, in other words people who are already saved. How can John tell believers in **1 John 1:8-10** that if we claim we haven't sinned then we're liars and make Jesus out to be a liar too, then promise us that if we'll just confess our sins, God is faithful and will purify us from all unrighteousness, and then 2 chapters later say that no one born of God continues to sin?

And how can John teach that believers will no longer sin, when Paul spent most of a chapter lamenting the fact that no matter how hard he tried he couldn't stop sinning, in fact the harder he tried, the worse he became? (**Romans 7:7-25**) and then tell us that because of Jesus, man is no longer condemned for his sins, that we've been set free from the law of sin and death, and nothing can separate us from God's love? (**Romans 8:1, 38-39**) Was John implying that Paul wasn't saved?

And where is the man or woman from any period in history who having become a

believer never sinned again? Have we all been forced to forfeit our salvation? Because we're all sinners. Every one of us.

Simple logic tells us that John had to be talking about a particular sin, not sin in general. And that's exactly the case. His letters were written as a warning against Gnosticism, one of the most dangerous heresies in the early church. It held that salvation didn't come from faith but from the acquisition of secret knowledge. It also argued that if Jesus was God, he couldn't have been a man, and if He was a man then He couldn't have been God. **1 John 1:1, 2:22, & 4:2-3** address this issue specifically. **Colossians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus,** and **2 Peter** also speak against this early heresy. And it's still here. Freemasonry, the New Age and Scientology are all re-packaged forms of 1st Century Gnosticism.

You have rightly called the denial of Eternal Security a form of bondage. What it takes for us to break this bondage is to use our powers of reason and logic to see the contradiction it presents. We have to ask ourselves if we really believe that God endured the most horrible death ever devised only to present us with a new set of even more impossible conditions for attaining eternal life. The Old Testament condemned men for their deeds, but the New Testament condemns us for our thoughts.

The proponents of conditional security have either had to surrender their own salvation or somehow exempt themselves from its conditions. Because if **1 John 3:9** has general application here's what's required to obey it . No anger, ever. No lust, ever. No envy, ever. No idolatry, ever. No favoritism or discrimination, ever. No impure thoughts or deeds of any kind, ever. (**Matt.5, James 2**) As John said, the man who claims he's never done any of these things is a liar. But it gets worse. Slip up once and you're out forever. (**James 2:10**) Is this the Good News, the incomparable riches of His Grace? I can't believe so.

OSAS And 1 John 1:5-6

Q. In light of what you mentioned at the end of your article, [“What does the Bible say” part 2](#), do you have a study that covers what is said in 1 John 1:5-6?

A. The article you referenced is about our security in Christ and **1 John 1:5-6** are not about salvation. Understanding what they are about becomes easier when we read **1 John 1:5-9** as a unit. We’ll begin with **1 John 1:5-7**.

“This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin” (**1 John 1:5-7**).

Verse 6 is about fellowship with the Lord, which is different from salvation. This is confirmed in verse 7 where John mentioned having fellowship with each other. The Greek word translated “fellowship” in both places means “to have an association with, or be part of a community with someone.” It is never used to define salvation because you can’t be saved just by being in fellowship with saved people. To clarify this, John defined salvation as being purified from all sin by the blood of Jesus at the end of verse 7.

Being saved is eternal and unconditional, based only on our belief. Being in fellowship with the Lord is a continual closeness to Him that depends on maintaining Biblical standards of behavior in the here and now. (Being in fellowship with one another requires maintaining the behavioral standards adopted by the group. Ideally, churches follow Biblical standards of behavior as well.)

Remember, John was writing to believers. They were saved, just like we are saved. He was saying that to also be in fellowship with the Lord we have to walk in the light, that is, according to His word. Even if we’re saved, the Lord can’t maintain a close relationship with us if we’re walking in darkness (sin). This is the case with many born again believers today.

1 John 1:8 reminds us that we're all sinners, and **1 John 1:9** tells us how sinners can remain in fellowship with the Lord. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

OSAS And Jude

Q. I don't believe your views on OSAS. There is no such thing as once saved always saved. If that was true no one would backslide and the Lord wouldn't give us so many warnings to stay saved. Just two of many scriptures to this effect are Jude 1:5-6. & 20-21. What do you think ?

A. Neither these two references nor any others from the New Testament can dispute OSAS. The context of Jude is the sin and doom of Godless men. His letter was written "to those who have been called, who are loved by God, and kept by Jesus Christ" (**Jude 1**). This confirms that it's the Lord's responsibility to see that none of us are lost (**John 6:38-40**).

Verse 5 speaks of the time when God culled the unbelievers from out of the people He brought out of Egypt. He was talking about believers and unbelievers, not about people who had lost their salvation. And Besides, OSAS was only promised to the Church, not to people in Old Testament times. And verse 6 is about fallen angels, where the same is true. It's not about humans who lost their salvation.

In **Jude 1:20-21**, the Lord's brother was encouraging believers to "keep the faith" and not be influenced by the false teachers who divide us, referring to verses 18-19. There's no mention of losing their salvation.

The Lord doesn't give us any warnings to stay saved because the Holy Spirit is sealed within us from the moment we believe to the day of redemption as a guarantee of our inheritance (**Ephesians 1:13-14, Ephes. 4:30**) and there's nothing anyone can do to change that (**John 10:27-30, Romans 8:38-39**).

OSAS and Rev. 2-3

Q. I had a question about your article on once saved always saved. You make some great points, but I'm confused because of the letters Jesus had John write to the 7 churches in Revelation. Over and over he tells them to repent or suffer some kind of punishment. Yet, they were saved...they were part of His church. How can this be?

A. The seven letters were all written to local congregations, five of which were experiencing doctrinal problems. (All those problems have their modern counterparts, by the way.) Today you'll find some individuals who are saved and some who are not in almost every congregation, and it was no different then. While most of letters contain criticisms of the congregation, and even warnings of judgment, every letter contains a promise to the individuals within the congregation who remain faithful. The point is, it's not congregations who are saved, it's individuals.

OSAS And Rev. 3:5

Q. I firmly believe in once saved always saved, and the verses that once led me to doubt it, for the most part, have been explained to me. However there is one verse that I still can't get my mind around, and that is Rev. 3:5. Now I know that we are not supposed to take one scripture and use it to disprove the many that say otherwise, yet since Rev 3 is talking to the churches, how do we explain that we have everlasting life if our names can be blotted out?

A. You're correct in saying we shouldn't take a single verse, especially one who's meaning is in doubt to us, and use it to negate all the verses we understand clearly.

But as a matter of fact, **Rev. 3:5** doesn't say that our names can be blotted out of the book of life. It says just the opposite. Look verses 4 and 5 together and you'll see this:

Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels. (**Rev. 3:4-5**)

He's basically telling the unsaved in Sardis that if they put their trust in Him like some of their friends have done, they too will be dressed in white and He will never blot their names out of the book of life. **Rev. 3:5** is one more promise, right from the Lord's mouth, that once our names are in the book they can never be erased. Once saved, always saved.

A.

OSAS And Rev. 22:19

Q. I am a believer of OSAS, however sometimes I run into verses I cannot explain, like Rev 22:19. It seems to imply our names can be removed from the Book of Life. What is your take on this verse and its meaning? How does it fit in with OSAS? What would be taking away from the prophecy of this book?

A. **Rev. 22:18-19** is a warning to anyone who tries to re-write the Book of Revelation by either adding things that God didn't say or by deleting things He did say. Although believers have interpreted the book in many different ways, I can't imagine any born again believer actually re-writing it. Therefore I think it was meant as a warning to non-believers not to alter the book with the intent of deceiving people.

About the Author



Jack Kelley is a former a business man who “grew up” in a main line denomination but 25 years ago experienced a radical conversion to Evangelical Christianity. Since then he has devoted most of his time and energy to studying and teaching the Bible, conducting studies throughout the western US and serving as teacher, counselor, and lay pastor.

Thirteen years ago he and his wife Samantha founded www.gracethrufaith.com where he has posted all his past and current studies and answers questions about the Bible from followers around the world. His Bible studies and answers to Bible questions have been read by millions of pastors, teachers and students and are regularly used as sermon topics and Sunday School lessons .

He has also written several books including Children’s Stories of the Bible, The Adult Version, Seven Things You Have To Know To Understand End times Prophecy, and The Redeemer. In addition,

He has posted numerous mp3 studies and ebooks which you can download from the site.

Jack and his family currently reside on the Baja Peninsula in Mexico where they serve as volunteer missionaries.

(Jack is not the former USA Today reporter, nor is he the former TV star and game show host.)

Find him @gtfjack on Twitter, on Facebook and at www.gracethrufaith.com