

Can we have assurance of salvation?

Salvation is Continuous

Salvation refers to something more than just a single event. It's ongoing.

The words "save" or "saved"—the act of saving or being delivered from sin and death—is the Greek word *sozo* (sode·zo).

Sozo is a nuanced word that is holistic in its meaning. It is not just being forgiven from sin, but an ongoing deliverance from harm, protection (keeping alive), healing, and making whole. It has not only spiritual, but mental and physical connotations.

(Ephesians 2:8–9) For by grace you have been saved (*sozo*) through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Instead of using the aorist (‘ā-ə-rəst) tense of *sozo*, which denotes a simple occurrence of an action without reference to its duration or repetition, Paul uses the perfect tense, which denotes completion, with continuing results. *Sozo* is both something already accomplished yet presently ongoing in a person's life.

Sozo also appears in this verse:

(1 Corinthians 1:18) For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved (*sozo*) it is the power of God.

The verb *sozo* here is in the present tense, which is a continuous action; not merely a past event.

NOTE: We conclude then that *sozo*—being saved—refers to not only a past new birth event, but the continuing flow of grace in the past, present, and future.

Every day of your life in Christ is an experience of God's continual grace—the ongoing holistic work of salvation. If you are daily partaking of God's grace, you are assured that you are being saved daily.

(1 John 1:7) But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Christ our Surety

(Hebrews 7:22) ... Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.

(John 14:16–18) And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you

The Holy Spirit is given as a guarantee to those who ask

(Ephesians 1:13–14) In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

(2 Corinthians 1:21–22) Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Jesus the Surety gives us present abiding help. We are assured as long as we remain in Christ and partake of His Spirit that we are saved in Him.

“Once saved, always saved”?

The “once saved, always saved” doctrine is a false teaching. It’s an unbiblical way to give people assurance of salvation. But instead, I call it the ***doctrine of insecurity***.

Contributing to this is the Calvinist teaching of predestination. The “elect” are pre-selected to be saved and can’t be lost.

Here are some warnings in the Bible about remaining faithful:

(Hebrews 6:4–6) For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.

(Hebrews 10:26–27) For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

(1 John 3:7–9) Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

(2 Peter 2:20–21) For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

(Revelation 3:5) He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.