

# The Terms of Salvation

Our society has come to expect convenience and instant gratification. "Instant" foods, from instant potatoes to microwaved gourmet meals from the freezer all provide instant hunger gratification. We can communicate globally just by punching a few numbers into our phone from a land line, cell or satellite phone or VOIP. We have access to a wide array of instant entertainment from our televisions, computers, radios, cell phones and electronic music and image players. In just a few hours we can travel across a continent or ocean. We don't have to leave our home to shop by television or computer. In the last 100 years our society has welcomed the concept of instant gratification as a basic necessity of life. It should be no surprise that religious leaders have tried to capitalize on this hugely popular concept of instant gratification.

Christian teachers and leaders often tell us that God requires very little from us and offers us everything. Everything for nothing is hard to pass up and pleasant to believe. Unfortunately, it is also a self-accommodating delusion! It is the pattern of con artists.

## The 'Only' Tripwire

In fact, our Creator makes clear what He requires from those who choose to serve Him and who may qualify to receive the gift of immortality and entry into His heavenly kingdom to be established on the earth. It is not as easy as much of Christianity would like to believe. However, professional religious leaders tell us that scripture supposedly supports this false concept of instant, guaranteed, salvation.

**Romans 10:9-10** *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. <sup>10</sup>For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Mankind's instinctive passion for oversimplification trips us up if we try to presume that this reference suggests that all we have to do is believe and confess and we instantly possess salvation. What this reference definitely does not say is if thou shalt **only** confess with the mouth... or ... and **only** shalt believe in thine heart. The word that is assumed is "only." People read Paul's words as if one "only" has to believe and "only" has to confess and they will automatically qualify for unconditional salvation. However, the word "only" is conspicuously missing from the text. Belief and confession are certainly necessary for salvation but not exclusive of all other divine requirements. Mortal man has come to expect everything to be quick and easy and subconsciously accepts the exclusivity of the salvation conditions of belief and confession.

Besides the fact that the word "only" does not appear in the text we have an even bigger issue with this inappropriate conclusion that if we simply believe in our heart and confess with our lips we can be awarded guaranteed salvation. That understanding would invalidate grace from the salvation process. Grace is undeserved favor. If one simply has to perform the deeds of belief and confession and they are guaranteed salvation then they have 'earned' salvation and the grace of God is eliminated from the procedure. Yet scripture is very clear that we cannot 'earn' salvation or stand before God demanding the salvation that we earned by performing the simple deeds he required.

**1 Corinthians 1:18** *For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*

This verse seems to suggest at first glance that salvation is presented as a past tense reality, that salvation is already a possession and therefore unconditional. Scripture is always worth more than a single glance that will only validate the deceitful heart's preconceived preferences.

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The word "saved" is not used in scripture as an all-inclusive, unconditional offer. For example the apostle Jude warns the brothers and sisters of the early church that even though God saved the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt he still destroyed them in the wilderness (Jude verse 5: *I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.* After God "saved" the children of God, He destroyed them. God saved them from the hopelessness of their Egyptian slavery, impoverishment and cruel domination. However, after they displayed faithlessness in the wilderness, refusing the gift of the promised land, God destroyed the people that He had saved. This rejection following being saved is recorded in Numbers chapter 14 when God condemned the men of war to die in the wilderness over the next 38 years before He would allow the subsequent generation to enter the promised land. In the 'Christian' era we have also already been saved but are still subject to destruction. We have been saved from hopelessness and slavery to sin and death, just as the Israelites were saved from Egypt. However, if we display faithlessness we too can suffer destruction. Ultimate salvation is not unconditional or guaranteed until it is awarded at Christ's judgement. This is why the apostle Paul also writes: *For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore **judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come**, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God* (1 Corinthians 4:4-5). The man who wrote "*unto us which are saved*" is the same man who wrote that we should judge nothing about ourselves until the Lord come.

This doctrine of instant, guaranteed salvation is an example of how some men twist the terms of the true gospel to worship themselves instead of the Creator. The truth concerning the terms of salvation elevate the Creator and require us to serve Him on his demanding terms consistently and never take anything for granted. Modern popular Christianity's concept of salvation in exchange for good intentions and spouting a simple magical phrase degrades God and elevates mankind, making it easier to obtain salvation than brewing a pot of coffee.

## What Are the Actual Terms for Salvation?

### **Proven Faith Saves**

This does not mean simply verbally confessed faith, but faith expressed by consistent faithful performance (deeds). It matters very little what we say or intend compared to what we actually do. Our deeds always prove our heart, no matter what our mouth professes.

Christians who want a free ride to salvation object to the requirement of actually doing anything. They want to simply spout the magic phrase of taking Jesus into their hearts and believing in him and then holding out their hands to God demanding the salvation they believe they have earned. They claim that salvation is by grace (undeserved favor) and therefore it is free and easy for the taking.

Salvation is certainly a gift. We cannot earn it. We will never have the right to stand before Yahweh demanding immortality and the quality of life scripture describes. We are saved by grace. However, that does not mean salvation is unconditional. God places several conditions on salvation. Just because salvation cannot be earned, that doesn't eliminate qualifying for the mere possibility of being awarded that saving grace. One of these basic qualifications for simply being considered for saving grace is an active faith, a faith proven by deeds, as opposed to a dead faith.

**Revelation 22:12** *And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*

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Jesus testifies that he will reward us according to our deeds, but not until he returns. We do not go to Jesus to receive our reward. He comes to us.

**Romans 2:6** ...the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath

**2 Corinthians 5:10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, **according to that he hath done**, whether it be good or bad.

We will be judged according to what we have done, not felt or said or intended to do someday. God will render to us in accordance with what we have done, not simply promised or intended.

**Revelation 20:11-13** And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and **they were judged every man according to their works**.

Once again we are warned that judgement for salvation will be based on what we have done, how we have demonstrated our professed faith in action. There is no magic phrase that eliminates all doubt.

**Matthew 5:20** For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Personal righteousness is required by our judge, not simply imputed righteousness from our Saviour. Our personal righteousness has to exceed that of Pharisees, it has to rise above the personal righteousness of that group that prided itself on being experts on God's law but whose performance was lacking. Personal righteousness is when our personal behavior demonstrates the righteousness principles of our Creator. It is personal in the sense of being distinguished from other people and certainly never from God, as He is the only possible standard for righteousness. There is no 'righteousness' apart from our Creator whatsoever. The personal aspect of righteousness is constantly validated all through scripture on the basis of the use of personal possessive pronouns in relation to righteousness... **my**, righteousness, **his** righteousness, **their** righteousness, **our** righteousness... etc.

**Matthew 16:27** For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Jesus will repay us for what we have done, not what we have simply felt in our hearts or simply expressed with our lips or simply intended to do once we had the time. He will do this when he returns dramatically to the earth. We do not go to him for our reward. He comes to us.

One of the conditions of salvation is faith. However faith that is only professed verbally is unacceptable to our judge, qualifying only for his disdain. Faith must be displayed actively in the things that we do.

**Proven** faith is necessary for salvation, not simply claimed faith.

## **Truth Saves**

It definitely matters what we believe. Our salvation depends on knowing the true gospel. Lies, misconceptions and self-worshipping delusions will not save us. There are two universal rules concerning all false Bible doctrine. Incorrect understandings about the Bible will always do two things.

1. False doctrine always degrades the Creator.

2. False doctrine always inappropriately exalts the human beings who invented or believe these distortions. Our judge demands we understand and humbly accept Bible truths.

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**1 Corinthians 15:1-2** *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; **By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.***

Paul's gospel can save us, **unless** we vary from it. If we reject the gospel that Paul taught, then we believe in vain. There can be no hope of salvation if we vary from the true gospel. This was Paul's beginning thought as he introduced the subject of the resurrection and the challenges that pivotal doctrine was already facing among the believers in Corinth, Greece (to whom he wrote).

**John 4:22-24** *Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and **they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.***

Jesus tells us that God demands true worshippers! It isn't presented as a request or a preference. It is demanded! Truth is a non-negotiable requirement for salvation.

**Ephesians 4:4-6** *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in **one hope** of your calling; One Lord, **one faith**, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

There is only one faith. There is only one body.... despite the hundreds of proclaimed Christian faiths and bodies today. God tells us there can only be one.

**Romans 10:1-2** *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but **not according to knowledge.***

Paul writes that he would love to see the Jewish people saved, because they certainly have enthusiasm, but without correct knowledge that enthusiasm is valueless in the pursuit of salvation. The good intentions of the Jews were insufficient for salvation. Knowledge was, and still is, and will certainly be necessary for salvation.

**Galatians 1:6-9** *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, **preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.** As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*

Paul is quite emphatic that there is absolutely no other gospel than the one he offered. This severe warning from the Apostle to the Gentiles (non-Jews) makes it clear that if anyone teaches incorrect understandings of the true gospel that they are divinely cursed.

**1 Timothy 1:3-4** *As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they **teach no other doctrine**, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.*

The first century believers were commanded to teach no other doctrine than the original gospel. Yet today there are hundreds of separate Christian churches with countless variations of scriptural understands, in direct opposition to clear Bible demands.

**2 Thessalonians 2:9-12** *Even him, whose coming is after the working of satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not **the** truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

Receiving and loving **the** truth is necessary to be saved. The definite article is used (**the** truth), as opposed to the indefinite article (**a** truth). It is one specific, definable truth that must be loved or we risk being deceived by the Christian and Pagan doctrines of the adversary (satan).

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**1 Timothy 4:16** *Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*

Paul exhorts his beloved Timothy to pay strict attention to the doctrine because it is this doctrine that will be instrumental in saving him and those who listen to Timothy. True doctrine is necessary for salvation.

**John 17:3** *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

Just before Jesus entered the Garden of Gethsemane where he would be arrested, he stopped to pray. This prayer is recorded in John 17. Jesus recognizes in this prayer that one of the terms by which we qualify for the conditional gift of eternal life is to **know** God and Christ. Therefore those who do not know them will not be given eternal life. This is interesting as the doctrine that we are told will identify the antichrist teaching is the doctrine that denies the flesh of Christ (2 John verse 7 *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist*). There are those who confess Christ, but reject his flesh, his humanity. This identifies their doctrine as being an antichrist generated teaching that would appear long before Jesus Christ returned and would be destroyed at Christ's glorious return (2 Thess. 2:1-3, 7-8). One of the conditions for the potential gift of receiving eternal life is **knowing God and Christ**.

There is absolutely no doubt that we must understand the correct Bible doctrines that were taught by Christ and the Apostles or we have no hope of salvation. Along with proven faith we can clearly see that truth is an unconditional requirement in qualifying for the gift of salvation.

### **Dire Warnings about the dangers of false doctrines abound throughout the New Testament.**

We have determined that an understanding of the true gospel and a tenacious refusal to vary from its limits is one of the conditions for salvation. Logically, wouldn't this premise require that there be repetitive warnings throughout the New Testament about the danger of varying from the features of this saving gospel? In fact, we do find abundant, powerful warnings about rejecting different false doctrines, thereby confirming our understanding that one of the conditions for the salvation following judgement is an understanding and deep appreciation for God's truth.

**1 Timothy 4:1-3** *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*

These false believers will depart from the faith by promoting false doctrines concerning devils and spirits and celibacy and refusing to eat meat at certain times. If true doctrine were inconsequential for salvation this prophetic warning would be meaningless. Isn't it strange how hundreds of millions of people claiming to be Christians still cling to the exact issues powerfully and clearly condemned in the Bible? The human heart is incredibly self-deceiving. Human beings have an amazing capacity to ignore inconvenient truths that challenge their own egotistical sense of self-worth.

**2 Timothy 4:3-4** *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when **they will not endure sound doctrine**; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And **they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.***

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Paul commands Timothy before God and Christ not to vary from the true doctrines of the gospel, because believers would begin to listen to whoever would tell them what they wanted to hear and turn from the truth to the more comfortable imaginary ideas they would prefer over humbling and difficult truth. This warning is as powerful for today's believers as it was in the first century.

**2 Peter 2:1-3** *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.*

The apostle Peter also warns about the proliferation of false teachers among the first century Christian believers and how the majority of professed believers would follow the false doctrines and false teachers. The true doctrines would come to be despised very quickly. The strength of this warning and dire prophecy underlines the significance of understanding the true gospel, as opposed to the self-worshipping delusions of popular Christianity who love the false teachers and hate humbling divine truths.

**Romans 16:17** *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*

Paul instructs the true believers to avoid anyone teaching contrary doctrines. Social distancing from those opposing divine truths was mandatory for the first century believers. This policy validates the understanding that truth is absolutely necessary for an eternal relationship with the Creator.

**2 Thessalonians 1:7-9** *And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

Everlasting destruction is the fate of those who do not obey the specific gospel of Jesus Christ, as opposed to the hundreds of current and historical gospel varieties of Christian churches. Just as no one receives their reward until Christ returns it is also true that punishment is reserved for when Christ returns visibly and powerfully to the world, not as the meek lamb but as the lion of the tribe of Judah.

## Sincerity That is Void of Truth Is Valueless

Sincerity without truth offers no value! Consider the precedent of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-7). Cain wanted to serve God, but on his own terms. Cain offered the fruits of his own labors, the fruit of the ground. Cain did not refuse to serve God. He simply refused to serve God on God's terms. Cain wanted to serve God in whatever way he personally chose. Abel was willing to serve God according to God's terms. Abel's animal offering was acceptable. Cain's sincere but incorrect offering was unacceptable. Cain's initial sincerity, without action based on truth, was rejected by God. Just as Paul respected the sincere enthusiasm of the Jewish people, he recognized their knowledge deficiency was a barrier to salvation (Romans 10:1-2 *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.*

This lesson is still true today. If we think we can sincerely serve God in any way we choose and think that God should be happy with whatever we are willing to do for him, then we are doomed to the same fate as Cain. The terms of salvation demand that we serve God on His terms, not our own.

False doctrine is divinely degrading and flesh exalting. As the Introduction stated, there are two universal rules concerning incorrect understandings about the Bible. These mutations of divine teaching invariably degrade our understanding of our Creator and inappropriately elevate ourselves in our own minds and hearts. This is nothing less than mirror worship. This is why truth is absolutely essential to qualify for the opportunity to be offered salvation. False doctrines twist our worship focus from our Creator to the mirror.

## Baptism Saves

Water baptism, practiced with full understanding of basic divine truths is one of the basic divine terms of salvation. Once we have come to an understanding of those humbling and heart circumcising truths we are invited to respond, demonstrating our understanding and commitment to the right-ness of our Creator through the ritual of baptism. The significance of baptism will be considered in another chapter. These particular thoughts will present the evidence that (water) baptism is absolutely essential for salvation.

**Mark 16:15-16** *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth **and is baptized shall be saved**; but he that believeth not shall be damned.* Those who hear the true gospel and respond with repentance and baptism qualify for salvation. Remember, the word "only" does not appear in the text. Belief in the gospel the apostles taught and baptism are two requirements for salvation but they are not exclusive. The Son of God himself tells us that baptism saves us.

**1 Peter 3:20-21** *Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were **saved by water**. The like figure whereunto even **baptism doth also now save us** (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.* Peter tells us that water baptism saves us. He goes on to say that the saving feature is not the putting off of the filth of the flesh (it isn't simply taking a bath), but a response from our conscience. This confirms the fact that the baptism that saves is water baptism. This is the divinely required response to how divine truths engage our conscience. The lessons within baptism will be addressed in the section concerning the divine rituals of the Ecclesial Age. 'Why' baptism is the required response will be addressed in that section. This section is simply addressing 'what' is absolutely necessary for salvation.

**Titus 3:5** *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the **washing of regeneration**, and renewing of the Holy Spirit.*

**Romans 6:3-5,8** *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection... Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:*

We are saved by the **washing of regeneration**. Baptism is referred to in the terms of regeneration (life after death) in the Romans 6:3-4,8 reference. Baptism represents a believer joining Christ in his death and his resurrection (regeneration). The "washing" of regeneration also confirms that **water** baptism is a necessary component of salvation.

## Hope Saves

Hope saves us. We certainly cannot take salvation for granted, since hope is a feature of the salvation process. We cannot 'hope' to possess that which we already possess. That would be absurd. It is hopeful confidence that we must exhibit, but not arrogant presumption concerning our own salvation.

**Romans 8:24-25** *For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*

We are saved by hope, which means we are not free to take salvation for granted or think that it is somehow guaranteed, making Christ's judgement inconsequential. This would be an act of extreme arrogance and would improperly elevate ourselves above the judgment authority of Jesus Christ.

**Philippians 3:11-14** *If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that*

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*for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

The apostle Paul hopes to attain to the resurrection of the dead. He does not presume any guarantee. There are two resurrections. The first resurrection is for both the just and the unjust (Acts 24:15) when these are assembled before Christ for the purpose of judgement. The second resurrection is from a dying state to a divine, immortal state, reserved for the just (described in 1 Cor. 15:51-55). The apostle Paul did not have to hope to attain to the resurrection to judgement. He was expressing his hope of attaining to the resurrection from mortality to immortality. Paul did not take for granted he had attained to this resurrection. He says he "**might attain**" the resurrection. He does not presume to have **already attained**, or apprehended. He **reaches** and **presses forward** toward the prize (of immortality). The apostle Paul certainly did not take salvation for granted in reference to himself, therefore we can't presume he taught this for anyone else.

**1 Corinthians 9:26-27** *I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: 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.*

Paul restrains himself so that he will not be rejected, even after he brought others to Christ through preaching the gospel. Paul fears being a Christ castaway if he does not labor to keep his natural urges in subjection, advising all believers to do the same. This Apostle certainly didn't teach anyone that salvation can be taken for granted or guaranteed.

## Fear Saves

We are saved by fear. Fear could never be a component of instant, guaranteed salvation. If we possessed salvation that even God couldn't take it away then we cannot fear divine rejection.

**Philippians 2:12** *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*

We must **work** out our salvation with fear and trembling. This does not mean we somehow have the capacity to **earn** salvation. It is always a gift, but if we do not work for it we will not even **qualify** for the possibility of the gracious gift of salvation. Qualification is something we can and must earn before we can ever be unmeritoriously favored with salvation. Fear and trembling is part of the salvation process. If we take salvation for granted we certainly have nothing to fear. Yet the fact that we are unafraid of missing out on salvation disqualifies us from the very gift of salvation. Fear is a positive motivation to good behavior. Salvation is conditional on Godly behavior. The Son of God commands us to be afraid.

**Matt 10:28** *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Gehenna).*

Jesus defines the necessary fear and the fear we must avoid. We do not have to be afraid of people who can only kill us once. They can kill the body but not the life (soul). We should be afraid of the one (God) who can kill us twice. Even if men kill our body, God can raise us from the dead at the resurrection to judgment. It is after the resurrection to judgment when we have the capacity to perish, to die forever. Jesus warns us to definitely be afraid of the one who can kill us and then keep us dead (something men cannot do).

This command to fear offending our Creator and the relationship between fear and salvation should be understood in the context of the entire Bible. Some may wish to retreat desperately to 1 John 4:17-18, comfortably presuming that this expression somehow invalidates Christ's command and Paul's clear statement of how fear is a necessary component of salvation,



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**1 John 4:17-18** *Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*

Jesus has already defined the fear that should be cast out. The fear that is eliminated by a mature love for our Creator is the fear of what men can do to us. That false presumption would declare Jesus to be advising us falsely. We are invited to look forward to judgment with boldness and hopeful anticipation, but never arrogant presumption. That is not a component of perfect love. Presumption of divine acceptance is a component of mirror worship.

Additionally, if we so desperately want to believe that mature (perfect) love removes completely all categories of fear then that necessitates even the dissolving of the reverential fear of God... which would be absurd. If we don't want to respect the selective defining of the fear that is eliminated by a mature love of God then we have to eliminate **every** category of fear, which is impossible. Our presumptions should not contradict the clear teaching from our Messiah concerning what fear is recommended and what fear should be eliminated.

## Endurance Saves

Jesus tells us we have to continue to the very end in order to be saved. Therefore we are not free to consider ourselves possessing any guarantee of eternal salvation before our judgment.

**Matt 10:22** *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but **he that endureth to the end shall be saved.***

We are not free to relax and presume salvation. We have to continue striving to the very end.

**Matt. 24:12** *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

Despite the vanishing of love within society and within the community of believers we must endure to the very end to qualify for salvation.

**Mark 13:13** *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but **he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.***

Despite the fact that lovers of the true gospel would be hated by the far greater despisers of truth and lovers of fables, the faithful are required to continue to the very end to be saved. There is no point of relaxation or presumption of ultimate acceptance to be accommodated by our judge.

**Hebrews 3:6,14** *But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, **if** we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. For we are made partakers of Christ, **if** we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.*

We qualify as the household of Jesus Christ and are qualified to be partakers of him only **if** we maintain our confidence firmly to the very end.

We are never free to presume a guaranteed, eternal salvation and inclusion in the kingdom of God. We are allowed to presume our 'qualification' for salvation and enjoy a hopeful confidence, but never an automatic nod into God's eternal kingdom.

The process of salvation requires qualification before grace is applied. In order to qualify for salvation:

- One must understand, believe and maintain the true gospel
- One must be water-baptized in response to that belief
- One must exhibit deeds reflecting that understanding and belief, despite harassment. Our behavior must match our intentions, exhibiting our Heavenly Father's righteousness in our

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thoughts and words and deeds.

- One must be subject to hope and fear
- One must continue in that truth and good deeds while they still have life

We can and must earn 'qualification' for salvation. We certainly cannot earn salvation! This must be awarded on the basis of grace.