



# “Ten steps to staying saved”

**S**alvation is the most precious possession we have. In the interest of staying saved, there are certain things we must recognize about the excellent plan of salvation —

1. It is possible to fall away from God (or backslide).
2. You do not have to fall away from God.
3. God wants to save you and He wants you to stay saved. God gets the glory for you staying saved and living consistently for Him. **II Peter 1:4-10** admonishes the saints to diligently add to their salvation, ensuring “if you do these things, ye shall never fall.” **Jude 20-24** tells us Jesus is able to “keep you from falling.” This is more assurance of living perfectly for God in this present world. In order to stay saved, salvation must be your highest priority; it must be your highest goal in life. You must see the importance of staying saved and the awfulness of not staying saved. Peter said, “if you do these things.” Doing means effort. We do what we want to do. You must have a desire to stay saved and never lose this desire. Guard and cherish this desire. Pray for your desires to be changed to match the desires of God.

If your desires match God’s, you will not be trying to work against or resist God. The following ten steps are by no means conclusive. They are simply guidelines to help you keep the victory.

## **Step 1: PRAY**

You must pray to keep from falling away from God. **Matthew 26:41** lets us know how prayer can be the difference between entering into temptation or not. We are to come boldly to the throne of grace to receive help in time of need (**Hebrews 4:16**). Prayer is described many ways: Prayer is talking to the one who is able to keep you from falling. It is the place where we intercede for ourselves and others. Prayer is where you find grace to overcome today. Prayer is talking to your Father. Prayer is one way you show your dependency on God. If you pray very little, what are you telling God? You are saying “I can handle it,” or “I don’t need you,” or “I don’t need your advice.” Fathers, if your children would not talk to you very much, wouldn’t you think something was wrong with the relationship? To be able to pray and to be on praying grounds with God is a privilege. We are told to cast all our care on Him for He cares for us (**I Peter 5:7**). Prayer is also known as the place where you cast your burdens and cares on God. **Philippians 4:6-7** instructs us to let our requests be known to God by prayer and supplication. With this comes the promise of the peace of God keeping our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

## **Step 2: READ YOUR BIBLE**

The Word of God is food for the soul; without it we will spiritually die. **I Timothy 4:13** tells us “to give attendance to reading” and we are exhorted to “study to shew thyself approved unto God” in **II Timothy 2:15**. We need to read God’s word to find out what His will is for us, and to learn for ourselves the advice He has for us. In **Romans 15:4** we read of how the scriptures were written for our learning and we can have hope through patience and comfort of the scriptures. Reading and studying the Bible will help us to know the doctrine for ourselves. This will take away confusion. In the fifth chapter of **John (verse 39)**, Jesus tells His followers to “search the scriptures” to learn of eternal life and of Christ himself. In **Acts 17:11** we read where the saints did this by searching the scriptures daily. God’s word is a comfort and encouragement through every spiritual battle. We also find it is good for instruction, correction, and reproof (**II Timothy 3:16-17**). Reading the Bible is essential in maintaining our salvation.

### **Step 3: ATTEND SERVICES**

We are commanded in **Hebrews 10:25** not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. **Verse 24** tells us this is to provoke each other to love and good works. By meeting together in a gathering of God's true people, we open ourselves up to many benefits. We pray together, sing together, and hear God's word together. We exhort and edify one another through our testimonies of what God has done for us. We fellowship each other and gain strength by refreshing the knowledge of other's victories in battles similar to our own. In the worship services we allow ourselves to be taught and admonished (**Colossians 3:15-16**).

One of the worst things we can do is to isolate ourselves from the saints. God had to provide for Elijah in the **19<sup>th</sup> chapter of I Kings** when he went into the wilderness to die. Elijah opened himself up to self-pity and other things when God still had seven thousand people standing for Him. It is imperative to attend worship services and keep ourselves close to the saints.

### **Step 4: WALK IN THE LIGHT**

As we grow spiritually, God will shed light (or understanding) on our pathway. In order to stay saved we must measure up to what we know. **I John 1:7** tells us if we "walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." This can be re-phrased as "if we live like Christ." In **II Timothy 3:14** Paul admonishes Timothy to continue in the things which he has learned. If we are to continue in this way we must keep our eyes on Jesus. We must mind our own business (not being a busybody in other men's matters). We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling as in **Philippians 2:12**. Two things to remember along these lines are: (1)

God doesn't reveal things to His children which are contrary to His word. He reveals truth, and the word and spirit agree. (2) For everything God shows us to do (or not to do), He gives grace for us to obey.

Your salvation is dependent on your constant spiritual growth; you cannot draw back on truth and stay saved.

### **Step 5: GET TRULY SANCTIFIED**

In **I Thessalonians 5:23** Paul admonishes believers to get truly sanctified; and in **Romans 12:1** he beseeches the saints to present their bodies living sacrifices for God's service. Sanctification is not just a second trip to the altar. It is not a "because-I-have-to" experience. But it is a result of hungering and thirsting after righteousness, a complete consecration. Sanctification is a result of having your all on the altar; knowing without a doubt God is first place. It is a doubtless knowledge of your whole desire being to live for God and please God. This same sanctification gives us power to live consistently for God.

In this day of luke warmness it is even more important for us to be sanctified. Because of this we are compelled to say those who draw back on sanctification will not be able to stay saved. This would agree with the admonition to walk in the light as God shows you. Without the second work of grace (sanctification) we will not make heaven our home.

There will come a time when we will be required to give God the one thing we have not surrendered to Him. At that time the carnal nature will prevail

and God will no longer occupy the highest place in our heart. The lack of true sanctification has been the basis for many up and-down experiences. Thus we cannot stay saved without being sanctified.

### **Step 6: DON'T GIVE IN TO DISCOURAGEMENT**

If Satan cannot get you to give in, he will try to get you to give up. **II Corinthians 4:7-9** makes reference to "earthen vessels." Because we are "earthen vessels" it is possible for discouragement to work on us. But **Romans 8:28** tells us "we know that all things works together for good to them that love God." Then in **verses 35-39** Paul asks the question (and answers it) of "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Thank God, we can be more than conquerors. Does God bring discouragement to His children? Joshua was discouraged and cast himself on the ground

and God told him to get up, "stand on thy feet." We can get discouraged through adverse circumstances beyond our control or because of lack of wisdom and judgment. We need to remember the promises in **Isaiah 40:28-31**. God will not fail us!

### **Step 7: DON'T LISTEN TO THE DEVIL**

We are told in **Ephesians 4:27** not to give place to the devil. Do not give him an opening to give you grief. Do not listen to the devil. Eve listened to the devil and fell. Most people have listened to the devil more than they would like to admit. Many problems are caused simply by listening to the devil. Some of these are unnecessary fears, torment, panic, terror, discouragement, and depression. In **I Peter 5:8-9** we read of how the devil goes about as a roaring lion. A lion's roar can strike terror in a person's heart. The roar itself is so terrible it actually immobilizes people and renders them helpless to the lion's attack. We must remember, as a child of God, Satan cannot lay a hand on us, but he sure can roar a lot. What must we do? Submit yourself to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you (**James 4:7**).

### **Step 8: WALK BY FAITH, NOT BY SIGHT**

We must learn to walk not by sight but by faith (**II Corinthians 5:6-7**). While we are at home in our bodies, we are creatures of emotions and feelings. (We will have a mixed bag of feelings.) We must learn to live by faith instead of our feelings. Let your faith guide you instead of your emotions. Base your experience on the unerring word of God. When we stand on the word of God, we can allow our feelings to run their course and still keep our salvation. **Hebrews 11:6** tells us it is impossible to please God if we have no faith. We will need faith to press over our feelings, to please God, to worship God, to praise God, and simply to stand. The victory is ours if we will but walk by faith and let our feelings go. One way to deal with feelings is to unload them on God. Tell Him just how rotten you feel and let Him know how you desire to live by faith. He will keep you.

### **Step 9: SEEK GODLY COUNSEL**

"Where no counsel is, the people fall" (**Proverbs 11:14**). Do not be afraid to seek counsel. There is nothing wrong with coming to your pastor and talking about a problem if you need to. In **Jeremiah 3:15** we read where God promised to give pastors after His own heart. Many times the answer to your problem may not be found in counsel, but it may help just to talk and pray with someone about it. This is much better than giving up. We each need to know our pastor well enough to be able to comfortably seek counsel when we need it. God expects us to pray and seek His counsel. He expects us to work on our own experience; but if you have to, seek counsel from your pastor.

### **Step 10: TESTIFY TO OTHERS**

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man ... of the hope that is in you" (**I Peter 3:15**). It is good to testify to others. Who is it good for? It is good for them and also good for you. When you witness it causes you to call to remembrance your personal testimony of what God has done for you. It strengthens you. It causes you to forget about yourself and be concerned about others. Jesus told the man delivered from the legion of devils to go home and tell his friends of the great things God had done for him (**Mark 5:18-19**). We are to let our light shine before men to point them to God. Witnessing to someone brings a joyful satisfaction. We know we are pleasing God by doing this and it reminds us of why we are here. **II Timothy 1:8** tells us "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord." And in **Luke 9:26** we can read of how Christ will be ashamed of us if we are ashamed of Him. In order to stay saved salvation must be your highest priority. Everything else in life must take a back seat to salvation in God. We must realize just how important it is to stay saved and we need to see how awful it is to backslide. Each of these steps is important and each should be studied in greater depth. God wants you to keep the victory and He gets glory for every soul who stays saved.

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