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Can salvation be lost? This is an argument that has been discussed many times. I will not say anything new regarding the matter and will leave a short comment as this is a huge topic. Still, I will try to be as biblical as I can and let you decide by yourself. What you will see here is just an opinion, and you need to consider and examine all in the light of the word of God. I know that both groups, the ones that state that salvation can be lost and the others stating that it can't, are right because they are both biblical. This fact doesn't mean that the Bible contradicts itself, but on the contrary, it means that it is complete and warns us regarding all situations and aspects of this matter and life.

In this blog post, we are discussing this matter and other facts that accompany these beliefs found in the Bible. We can start with a verse in [1 Corinthians 10:13](#)

“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

We can see here a promise to those who already received this precious salvation. We need to underline that salvation is a gift obtained only and exclusively by faith in the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. By faith in His blood that was shed for us. We are all debtors because of our sins, it doesn't matter how much we've sinned; we cannot pay it by ourselves, and we cannot pay it by any good deed done by us, as the good deeds don't and can't give anything to God. We are debtors, and the solution is found by faith in Him through His blood. We need to ask for forgiveness. But the reason why we receive this forgiveness is because He paid for it. We had to pay, but by having faith in His name, He takes the punishment instead of us.

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So, in this verse of **1 Corinthians 10:13**, we find that no temptation has overtaken us except such as is common to man, and God is **faithful**, meaning that He will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that we may be able to bear it. It means that He is faithful and He is in control. And we can rest on this promise. I am speaking for those who have been redeemed that we can trust in this promise. By this passage, we see that we cannot lose our salvation because there is not such a temptation that He can allow to happen that we cannot overcome through faith. I'll add to this that there is a requirement. And this is to be in Him, to have faith in Him, because He is the one that overcomes. Out of Him, we cannot make it. He is the one who takes all the glory.

Let's see some other verses.

“This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.” **(2 Timothy 2:11-13)**

It clearly says that He remains faithful. This is His permanent condition. But we need to see that He remains faithful to Himself, to what He is, because the verse says He cannot deny Himself. He is faithful to what He says. **In this way, we can see that there is security in Himself. So we can conclude that we cannot find this security out of Him.** I don't think this verse says exactly that if we are faithless, He will bear with that and will still be faithful toward us, but rather that He is faithful to what He represents and says. Of course, He is faithful toward us, but He is much more faithful to His word. So, the best for us would be that we can be found in Him.

With the next passage, we can see the other side of the way God works.

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“I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently will find me.” (Proverbs 8:17)

Here, we see He will show His love to those who love Him. Therefore, here we see something that He requires from us. This is for those who have already accepted Him so they can live for Him and have experiences with Him. He pursues and doesn't let go of people who somehow have this attitude. I'm not speaking about people who succeed in this by their own ability; no one can succeed or love God by his own strength. This verse is for those who have already experienced His salvation because how can someone love God if he doesn't experience His love first?

“We love Him because He first loved us.” (1 John 4:19)

He loves people and gave His life for them, but they need to believe in His name to enter into this love and make part of this promise.

In this sermon, we will see the two possibilities of what can happen with salvation. We will see what the Bible says about it. This doesn't mean that we find a contradiction here. We can rest on the promises of God that He will accomplish what He has started, but at the same time, we need to be careful as well and listen to the warnings. One thing is sure. And this is that “in Him” we are saved, and all the promises are accomplished.

For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen. (Romans 11:36)

I need to seek **Him** for salvation. He is the rock of my salvation. It comes from Him. In this way, He takes all the glory. God looks for the glory because He really deserves it.

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One of the issues also is that people think they can be saved through their works and **boast** because of them. God cannot bear this attitude, and He resists the proud people.

But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:

“God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble.” (James 4:6)

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

Some people trust in their own works to be saved. We can generally divide the people into two groups. Those who rely more on their works and those who lean more on their faith. Some people give more importance to what they do and think they can preserve their salvation through their efforts, while the Bible says it is by grace alone. These people boast about what they do. And we see that the Bible speaks about both – works and faith. Then, there are people who focus more on faith and believe they are chosen by God to inherit His blessings (which might be right, because God is the one who really chooses and shows mercy), but if this is taken in the wrong way, it is similar to the attitude of certain Jewish people we find in the Bible. They emphasized that they are chosen people and God’s nation. We can see that they were also boasting in a way about those things, thinking that they were superior and special.

“Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as *our* father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.” (Matthew 3:8, 9)

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This is what John the Baptist said to the Jews because, as we see, they were boasting about being sons of Abraham and God's nation.

Therefore, even those who say that everything is by grace and God has particularly chosen them could have the attitude of boasting.

By this, we see two limits, and both of them can be wrong and, at the same time, right. It depends on how and with which attitude we are taking them. The two main streams on which the doctrine of salvation stands are Calvinism and Arminianism. Calvinists generally believe that once you accept Jesus and are saved, you are always saved as God has promised to carry you till the end and is faithful to what He says. They believe in “Eternal security”, which means that you can never lose your salvation if you are a genuine Christian. Some even believe you will never backslide or fall out of the way, and whoever does, was probably never saved. I personally think this is partly true because most people who backslide do that because they don't have a solid foundation of which is spoken in [Matthew 7:24-27](#). I still think that a true Christian can backslide and get out of the way, but he will eventually return to God and repent. What I personally tend not to believe in is the idea that you can never lose your salvation. We are discussing here a topic concerning salvation which has been a debating point for a long time, and that's why I say that on some points I am just expressing an opinion. I mean that I might be wrong. Each person needs to examine the scriptures well and seek God's guidance for a clear answer. So, I think that when a person “persists” in the wrong way, and God keeps on calling him, but still neglects it, can lose his salvation. This I think is a process, and it doesn't happen in a moment. The Bible warns us against hardening our hearts ([Hebrews 4:7](#)).

Calvinists are more inclined to lean toward the faith rather than works, which is Biblical. They state that since your calling, God is the initiator of all, and He must guard you till the end. They favour “predestination”

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over “free will” which the Arminians believe. Calvinists support their belief in eternal security with verses such as John 10:28, Philippians 1:6, 2 Thessalonians 3:3, 1 Peter 1:5, 1 John 2:19, and Jude 24.

Arminians, instead, are more inclined to trust in their works because they believe that man is the one who gets to choose to follow God and to preserve his salvation. These are some of the passages through which they support the doctrine about losing salvation: John 15; Acts 5:1-11; Rom. 11:22; Heb. 6:4-6, 10:26-29; Rev. 3:5. By speaking about these two movements, I am not taking a position to say that one is completely right and the other completely wrong. I am neither saying that those who follow one or another are not genuine believers. Both of these ways of looking at salvation are right at some points, and in both of them, we find genuine believers who believe in God and the Lord Jesus Christ. The problem lies when we go to extremes. When those from Arminianism point too much at the works, the role of man, and the fragility of salvation, they are wrong. In the same way are also those following Calvinism when excluding totally the man’s role and responsibility.

Even though I define myself as one showing sympathy toward Arminianism, I prefer to stay somewhere in the middle between these theologies. This is because the Bible talks about and points out both of these perspectives, and we need to consider its entirety. It is often said that we mustn’t stay in the middle, but this is more about not staying between the world and God. In many other areas, we need to have balance and not get to extremes. One of the points of Calvinism with which I agree, for example, is the one saying that man is completely deprived, and by himself, he cannot choose God. They rightly point out the passage in Romans saying:

“As it is written:

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“There is none righteous, no, not one;
There is none who understands;
There is none who seeks after God.” (Romans 3:10, 11)

Man needs God’s intervention so that he can be able to acknowledge his need and repent sincerely. I believe in the meaning of this passage because it is in the Bible. Still, I believe that once a man has heard clearly about the Gospel and knows the truth, he can choose. This moment is very particular and doesn’t always come to man. It usually happens that when a person gets to that point, and for some reason, he rejects God’s gift, he starts to harden himself afterward. Then God will still look for him and keep sending His word to him to persuade him, but it will be more difficult for that person to reason over that message and be willing to accept it. In the beginning, most people are somehow open to the gospel. They still don’t believe it, and accept it, but are more open. Then, there comes a moment in which there is a choice with which they are presented. So, I believe and agree with the part the Calvinists believe when saying that man is totally deprived and needs God’s intervention to open his eyes. That’s why salvation is God’s work, and we do not produce it in our lives. God is the one giving you the desire and the strength to follow it. Still, I do not completely believe in the “irresistible grace”. Grace is indeed irresistible, but it might be a time in which a person can grow cold and fall spiritually asleep. We cannot completely reject the thesis that a person can harden himself with time. This is what the Bible points out in [Hebrews 3:12-15](#); [4:7](#), [Proverbs 28:14](#). I also think that at the beginning, when a person is presented with the opportunity to accept Jesus, and he chooses not to, it is because of his choice. In a way, the grace of God, even though not completely manifested in Him, is still being manifested in part, just enough so that he can choose. All the people will be judged one day. Even those who didn’t hear the gospel properly, as God has testified to

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them through nature and the creation ([Romans 1:20](#)). Still, some others will be judged differently because they knew more and had a greater opportunity. See the verse in ([Luke 12:47, 48](#))

“And that servant who knew his master’s will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.”

This verse talks about our responsibility, and to me, it describes those who have heard the gospel clearly and those who do not but still have received a testimony given to them by God’s creation or some other particular situation. This means that God holds us responsible for what we do.

We need to know that the opportunity God gives us is great, and we mustn’t think at all that it would be better if we didn’t have it because He offers us salvation. By the verse mentioned above, we see that God requires something from us, and yes, He plays a whole part in salvation, but still, there is our part and responsibility. I repeat that by speaking about our responsibility and part, I do not mean that a person can save himself. This is only possible by God’s saving grace. When someone rejects God and doesn’t get saved, it doesn’t diminish the power of God, meaning that He couldn’t save him, but it just points out the depravity of men. Some people believe that “when someone is not saved is for the simple reason that God never chose him because He is an all-powerful God who can save whoever he had preappointed, meaning that if He chose that person, and that person didn’t respond to the invitation or went out of the way after accepting it, it would mean that God wasn’t powerful enough to preserve him. And as He is

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all-powerful, but that person got lost on the way or didn't accept the invitation, we conclude that He never chose that person. To me personally, this fact doesn't mean that God couldn't preserve that person; it simply shows that person's depravity and hardened heart.

Better for us is to accept both of these concepts. The Calvinism and the Arminianism's point of view. I think that the best solution for us is not to get divided between these concepts and to remain faithful to what His word says, and this is to be in Him. He is in the center of all, and by Him, we are saved. If we examine His word carefully, we will see that it speaks about both sides because both are Biblical, but He is in the center of all. Without Him, we cannot get saved, and we wouldn't even be able to have this discussion.

Let's see something about the salvation. It is His work. We cry out to Him, but **He** saves us. It is not a simple cry, but one that comes from the deepest part of our soul and heart, and it is His work to show us our condition so that we can see our needs. The Holy Spirit comes to us to convict us of our sins.

Just imagine that someone is drowning in water. Won't he cry allheartedly for help? He won't just shout out for help but will intensively cry out. This is what happens when someone sees his condition. This is the kind of cry we need to have toward God. Maybe some people can't see their need, can't see their real condition that they are drowning. We need to ask Him to reveal it to us. Maybe He is already doing it, so we must be attentive to hear Him. So, through this, we see that salvation is His work in us. At the same time, we see some people saying: "I will not believe until He shows me a sign and starts working in me." They will not make a step till He starts working. This could be right in part, but if it is done with the wrong attitude, it sounds

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like testing God, and this is not right. God has probably shown them something, but not in the way they expected.

Speaking about the two realities and teachings in the Bible that apparently differ from each other, we can see [Psalm 85:10](#).

“Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed.”

We can see here how the two realities of the Bible meet together—the mercy and the truth, the righteousness and peace. Jesus Christ is all of these things together. God is all these things together; consequently, His word teaches them as well. Here, we see the mercy and the truth (law), the faith and the works. These doctrines are found in the Bible, and they complete each other. They are not meant to create divisions but to represent the complete picture of what God wants to teach us. They are truth because they are found in God’s word. They meet together and complete each other. When I talk about works, I am not referring to works that bring salvation because salvation is by faith, but I speak of the works that God requires from us, mostly when we are saved already. There are people who are inclined to reject the role of the works entirely, but we see that the Bible doesn’t exclude them ([James 2:14-24](#), [Ephesians 2:10](#)). These things are not meant to create a division or contradiction, as someone might state. Together, they complete the truth in its totality. When discussing faith and works, we also include those who think salvation cannot be lost and those who think it can.

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already clean because of the word which I have

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spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

⁵ “I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ 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. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. (John 15:1-8)

Here, we see that every branch not bearing fruit is taken away by the Father, and in verse 6, we see that those branches are even gathered together and burned. We can see that something is required from us, and this is to bear fruit. This fruit doesn't come from us and is not for our glory, but it comes from Him. We are not capable of bearing fruit by ourselves. This is possible only by Him working in our life. These verses indicate that we need to be in Him so that something can happen in our lives. John 15:5 says that we have to abide in Him. Someone might state that whenever a man is involved in doing something, even something good, he is to bring glory to himself. This is partly true, but here, it states that we must bring fruit. This fruit is something that we do or show, but he produces it in our lives. It means we are also meant to do something, but in the right way through Him. As this fruit comes from abiding in Him, therefore it brings glory to Him.

We can also add here that we cannot do anything about the work of salvation for others. We cannot save people; God is the one who does that, but we can certainly ask God to show us the way we need to approach others with the gospel. There is only one right way, and this is

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His way. Nothing of what we know or have learned can help or bring more fruit than His way. Even doing our best, we cannot really help others regarding the gospel. It is needed His work and wisdom with which He can show us how to approach others. In this way, we see that, even if there is fruit in what we do, it is because of His work and way; it is because He showed us how, and we obeyed. All the glory be to Him!

We also need to be careful so that it doesn't happen to us what is written in [Hebrews 3:6-8](#)

⁶ but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

⁷ Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: **“Today, if you will hear His voice,**

⁸ **do not harden your hearts** as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness,” (emphasis added)

We mustn't harden ourselves. God is warning us, especially for this kind of attitude. If we have it, it looks like this is the condition where He cannot work much in us. Obviously, He is almighty and can soften the hardest heart, but there are attitudes and conditions, and I think our side on the matter is important. When someone hardens his heart, it means that he persists and keeps walking in the wrong direction. Meanwhile, God warns him, and he, knowing that, still persists in going in the wrong direction.

And we need to know that God doesn't force. He leaves us with a choice and keeps warning us, but He will never force us completely against our will. He will also help us understand why we must accept His way so we can willingly agree and follow Him. When He gives us understanding and comprehension, we do that. We will never be able to accept something if it is completely against our will, and no one follows Christ against his will. It is because he came to the realization that he needs Him, and he follows Him willingly.

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That's why the Bible speaks about love; it tells us to love God, and love is not something forced, but it comes out of the will of an individual. On the contrary, love is the one that compels, that forces, but the love in itself is not forced. People love God because they really feel it. Because they felt God's love first, they feel really grateful. Still, a person cannot feel forced to love God. Otherwise, it wouldn't be love. By this, therefore, we see that God doesn't force someone, but rather makes Him understand why that is really important. When I say that He makes Him understand, I say He really does that, deep in someone's heart. There, He touches us and opens our eyes to see the purpose.

The part of understanding is really important. There is the famous parable of the sower in Matthew 13, where it is said that those who received the seed on the good ground, are those who hear the word, "understand" it, and bear fruit.

"But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands *it*, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." (Matthew 13:23)

Those are the people who understood that God loves them. They didn't just understand logically but realized it with their hearts. They live it. God is the one who makes us understand this reality. He gives us that understanding. In fact, it was Jesus who explained the parable to the disciples. When they asked Him why is that he talks to the multitudes in parables, He told them:

"He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given." (Matthew 13:11)

Later on He carries on explaining why is that it hasn't been given to them:

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And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:

‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand,
And seeing you will see and not perceive;
For the hearts of this people have grown dull.
Their ears are hard of hearing,
And their eyes they have closed,
Lest they should see with *their* eyes and hear with *their* ears,
Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn,
So that I should heal them.’ (Matthew 13:14, 15)

It was because of their hardened hearts and ears. It is all about faith. The disciples couldn't understand either the meaning of the parable. The parable of the sower is one of the main parables because it teaches us how to understand the word of God. Once we understand this, we have the key to understanding everything else. I mean the word of God. That's why Jesus told them in [Mark 4:13](#) concerning the same parable: “And He said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?”

So, the disciples couldn't understand it, but they asked Jesus. This is how we can understand things fully. Jesus needs to explain His word to us personally. Faith is needed for that. Perhaps another believer can help you understand something when you ask him, but the miracle occurs when God personally helps you with that. It might happen when you hear a sermon, or when you read His word. The last paragraph finishes with the words: “lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.” It looks like He didn't want them to understand and be healed, but the purpose here is different, and it is that He wouldn't let them understand and be healed without their

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faith. He wanted them to believe first because this is the most important. Much more important than even the healing itself!

Just imagine if they would understand and be healed without believing. In that case, they would be healed but without having faith and without being saved. His main purpose for us is to be saved because salvation is something eternal. Maybe the fact that He closed their eyes because He didn't see faith in them, but just their hardened hearts, would help them somehow. Seeing their condition, seeing that they are not healed, they will come aware that something is not right, and that would encourage them to look for faith; to examine themselves and see what impedes them to believe. This is one of the reasons why God doesn't answer our prayers sometimes. For the lack of faith. Faith is what He cares for the most, because through it we connect with Him, and we are saved. Faith is what we need, and it is for our good. Sometimes, to show us that we lack faith, He doesn't answer our prayers. We know as well that sometimes He might also not answer prayer because it is not a time. This is a hard topic to understand, as we are used to look at what matters to us more, **while God looks at what matters to Him, which is the best for us** because He is our Creator. So, the main reason is a hardened heart. This is also what the parable talks of: A hard and unbelieving ground, and a soft and fruitful one. Obviously, this ground is in such a condition because it didn't leave itself to be worked on. Through faith, we leave Him to work in our ground (heart). In Ezechiel 36:26, it is said that He will remove the heart of stone and replace it with a heart of flesh. This I believe, is our part in this process. Not the change of heart because we cannot do it by ourselves, but to allow Him to work in us. We cannot accomplish the work of salvation, but we can leave Him to do it. The moment of choice comes when we hear clearly and deeply the word in us. Without this moment, no one can choose because he doesn't know the truth.

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He is more interested that we have faith in Him, than anything else. He even promises us to provide everything else for us when we have faith.

While the first and the last type of ground speak of two completely different hearts, one hard and unbelieving and the other open and disposed to the word, there are the second and the third ones representing hearts that apparently received the word but later stumbled.

”²⁰ But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²² Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.” (Matthew 13:20-22)

According to Calvinists, for example, these two types of ground are definitely grounds that have never believed. They are not those with a good heart that produces fruit; therefore, they were never predestined to be saved. Their destiny in fact shows it. But could it be that they show us an attitude of heart that we can have throughout our life, and they are placed there as a warning to us, telling us that even after someone believes and receives the word, he can also stumble, not all of a sudden but can gradually let his heart be full of the wrong things. To me, the type of ground that can mostly affect the believer’s lives is the second last – the one having thorns. The other one, which represents the heart receiving quickly with joy, could also be the case, but in general, we see that happening to many people.

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Now, we need to decide. Or these two types of ground never experienced the gift of the Spirit, never converted, and in consequence, the most obvious happened – they were lost at the end, or perhaps they had experienced God’s grace to a certain stage and even started walking on the path. Then, the love of the world slowly made its way into them and started growing. It grew up to the point of suffocating the word, which **became** unfruitful. Notice that the phrase used in the gospel of Matthew chapter 13 v. 22 is “becomes unfruitful”. Some other translations don’t use this exact phrase, but this one makes you think about it. Surely, the example of this type of ground could also be used for people who never believed and accepted Jesus; consequently, they loved the world more than God. That’s why I am not saying that this type of ground has to do solely with Christians who turned away from the faith. As for the idea that we could be talking of people who knew God and then backslid, we can look at Hebrews 6:4-8:

⁴ For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ 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.

⁷ For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; ⁸ **but if it bears thorns and briers, *it is* rejected and near to being cursed, whose end *is* to be burned.** (emphasis added)

We can see that here is spoken of persons who have been enlightened and who have been partakers of the Holy Spirit. It also gives us an example of a ground bearing thorns and briers. I am not giving this

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scripture for condemnation, and I am not saying that a believer can easily lose his salvation. The matter of losing salvation is a mystery, and there are certain things that we will be able to certainly know only at the end when we are in front of God. Till then, we need to consider the scripture in its entirety. God is willing to forgive us when we failed. He is like that father who awaits his son with open arms at the gate of His house. This scripture just addresses the case when someone persists stubbornly in the opposite direction. In the same epistle to the Hebrews which we discuss is also written:

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)

It seems like the Calvinists completely disregard man's responsibility. They don't say it plainly, but by what they state, it looks so. Is this what the Bible says? We need to know that going in the opposite direction saying that man needs to work for his salvation is also a dangerous ground. We can become proud and start trusting in our own strength. Pride is what God opposes most of all things. Arminians are inclined to go to the opposite extremes of Calvinism, where the focus is on the man's works. Still, the Bible teaches us about man's responsibility. Do the scriptures talking of eternal security reject it completely, or do they simply confirm that “if” we abide into the scripture and we do what is required from us with God's help, then the eternal security enters into place as God does not contradict Himself, and if He promised that will preserve us till the end, He will do it. This is if we abide in Him (John 15:6). If we fail, we are not showing that God cannot carry His promises forward, we just show that we were not faithful. This is at least my opinion.

A Christian who is truly being saved never loses His salvation by chance, or because He didn't pay attention to something but because he persisted in the opposite direction and hardened himself. He will

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definitely pay the consequences of not being careful about something, but I don't think he will lose everything. It can happen if He still carries in that direction over and over. That's why God warns us in this way about the danger of hardening our hearts.

There is a sin we can compare to a "banana peel", meaning that I can walk on the street, and without paying attention I can step on that peel, fall down and hurt myself. I don't wish it to anyone, but at the same time, it is much better for us if the sins that we commit can be like that "banana peel" and not because we look for them. And obviously, we can't find excuses in front of God, and we need to ask Him for forgiveness for all the sins we do. He knows the deepest part of our hearts and the intentions with which we perform each action.

There is the phrase "in Him" that we find in various parts of the Scriptures. This phrase brings all things and opinions together. The one of the works and the one of the faith, because we can be "in Him" only by faith and we can do works that glorify His name only if we are "in Him".

"For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us." (2 Corinthians 1:20)

This verse shows that **all the promises are Yes and Amen in Him**. This phrase also brings together those who say that salvation can be lost and those who say that it can't because "in Him" we can't lose it and "out of Him" we can.

So, we often see those two doctrines being pushed beyond their limits. One is that we need to do something about our salvation, that we need to do the hardest and sacrifice over and over. The other one is that we mustn't and can't do anything, and we just need to wait for something to happen. We need to find an equilibrium between these two. Both of

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them are found in the Bible, meaning we need to consider all two of them.

Let's see chapter 9 of Romans, where we can find more on the topic.

There is something about the nation of Israel in v.27

“Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved.”

(Romans 9:27)

By this, we see that even though they are His nation, only a remnant will be saved, and it will be saved by mercy, same as us. It is not by the fact that they are His nation they will be saved. It is true that God has placed His sight on them because they belong to Him and are special for Him, but they, as well as us, need faith to be saved. If it is not in this way, then it is not by faith in Him but by merits and works, something that Jesus and the apostles strongly opposed. We see Jesus saying in [Matthew 8:11, 12](#), “And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

This is one example that speaks about Israel, referring to them as “the sons of the kingdom”.

This is the way God has appointed salvation to happen. By faith. In chapter 11 of Romans, which continues speaking about Israel, the author gives an example with an olive tree.

¹⁶ For if the firstfruit *is* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*; and if the root *is* holy, so *are* the branches. ¹⁷ And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and

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fatness of the olive tree, ¹⁸ do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, *remember that* you do not support the root, but the root *supports* you.

¹⁹ You will say then, “Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰ Well *said*. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. ²² Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in *His* goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. ²³ And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. (Romans 11:16-23)

We see that some of the branches were broken off and, in their place, others were grafted in. Those broken off were Israel, and they were broken off because of their unbelief. The new ones are those from the gentiles who believed, but there is a warning that if they boast against the other branches, they may be cut off, too. Notice that here, it speaks again about boasting. This is something that God cannot bear and support. We need to know that if we are something, it is because of Him, because of this root that supports us and makes us holy. Out of the plant, we are nothing. And we, like the nation of Israel, can be broken off because of our unbelief. If we are grafted (the same applies to those from Israel), it is because of faith.

In the whole of chapter 9 of Romans, we can see that it speaks about mercy and how God shows it. In v.16, we see also that He alone shows mercy and it doesn't depend on who wills or runs, but of God who shows mercy.

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“So then it is not of him who wills, nor of who runs, but of God who shows mercy.” (Romans 9:16)

This certainly is true because the one who gives and the one from whom it depends on who and how much will be given is God. He alone has this authority, and we need to recognize it. And this here is about His authority and sovereignty and how we will submit to it and recognize it. We need to ask Him to open our eyes so that we can be able to acknowledge it.

That’s why it doesn’t matter how much and how hard I’m running or doing something. What we need to do is to run in the right way and to will in the right way. If we see this chapter 9 of Romans, it speaks about the nation of Israel and how they failed, trusting in their own way and righteousness. So, from this, we see that the problem wasn’t that they were willing or running, but it was that they were doing it in their own way. Paul said for them: “For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.” (Romans 10:2)

Here, we see why it says in the verses before that it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy. It is of God. He is the one to whom all the blessings and power belong. It means that His authority is important. And we need to submit ourselves to it.

Look at something. If you ask for something from God and don’t find any answer, then there are various possibilities of what might be happening.

1. Perhaps what you are asking is wrong, or it is not according to God’s will for your life.
2. Perhaps what you are asking is right, but it is not time yet for you to receive it.

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3. What you are asking is right, but you are not asking for it correctly. Maybe it is humility or more faith needed in these moments.
4. The question is how can we know which one of these is our situation? It is through Him that we can know through His Holy Spirit. He is sent here to guide us in all the truth, and He can also show us our condition.

Many times, the one asking God to work in his life hasn't come to repentance yet. In this case, before doing any other work in his life, God will desire for him to repent first, and then He will accomplish something in his life. I saw many people asking God to accomplish things in their life or bless them, but they may haven't come to repentance yet and don't listen to His voice calling them to it. **God is not as interested in other things in our lives as He is in our salvation. That's His first priority for us. And He cares for it more than we do.** Once this is accomplished in someone's life, He starts working and providing in other areas in our lives, always and only for His glory. Until then, He will work in someone's life with the only purpose to bring him to salvation.

Going back to the topic of the nation of Israel, we can have a look at **Romans 10:3**

“For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.”

Here, we see the main issue the nation of Israel was having. And this is to try to follow God’s righteousness in their own way, establishing their righteousness. We see again why to “run” or to “will” only is not the most important. Because when we run, we need to do it in His way. This is **His righteousness**. He is the one who shows mercy, so it means

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that it depends on Him. And this means that His rules are above everything else. He establishes the rules and the way we need to run.

In these chapters of Romans (from 9 to 11), we find that it speaks a lot about God's will, God's sublimity, and His election. We find the story of Jacob and Esau mentioned, where we see that God chooses Jacob instead of Esau ([Romans 9:10-13](#)) and we find also the story of Pharaoh, where we see that God hardened him. Concerning the election of God, how He has established His will and how this comes to pass, and our choices in the midst of all this, we can exclaim together with Apostle Paul:

“Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgements and His ways past finding out!” ([Romans 11:33](#))

Still, in this chapter, we can also see to whom God has hardened the heart and whom He has chosen. His choice over someone is obviously by mercy, but we can see that those who were hardened had certain attitudes, if we can say so. For example, Pharaoh continually refused to free the nation of Israel, and in the end, God Himself hardened His heart. For Esau, for example, we see that he never gave as much value to the blessings of God in his life. He sold his birthright for a plate of lentil stew because he was hungry then ([Genesis 25:29-34](#)). I am not saying that the people who were chosen have done something for this to happen; I'm saying that those who were not had a particular attitude.

We can also see another part in [Romans 9:19-21](#)

“You will say to me then, “Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?” But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed *it*, “Why have you

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made me like this?” Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?”

The Bible says He is the potter, and we are the clay. And I think that not by chance, this verse speaking about the clay is found here in this chapter that speaks so much about God’s election and His will. It is because we need to submit under His hand so that He can mold us into His image. There is no other way. He needs to make a space in our hearts for Him. It is a process. It doesn’t happen in our way.

I see God as a sculptor or, better said, a woodcarver who works in our hearts, taking out what is not needed and making a space for Him so that He can dwell there. This is just my opinion, but I think those elected leave themselves to be molded by Him, and those who are not don’t do it. This is how we persevere in His way and in His salvation. When we walk in His way, we don’t and can’t lose it, but the story is different when we do things our way. Most of the time, He works in us while we go through trials and tribulations. In the moments when you can’t see God around you and maybe you think that He is not working, there are many times when He does that the most. We need in these moments also to keep on asking Him for that.