

Christians Being Disqualified?

But why?

By who?

We know, that the Lord adds people to His church (Acts 2:47). So, if the Lord adds people to the church, who would be able to disqualify them? After all, we have all sinned (Romans 3:23), right?

Has it not been said that "Once you are saved, you are always saved"? If that's true, then how could I ever be disqualified?

Men can disagree over most anything, but we need always to be diligent not to make "the Word of God of no effect" through our traditions (Mark 7:13)

What does the Bible actually teach in regard to the permanence of our salvation?



Can a Christian Become Disqualified?

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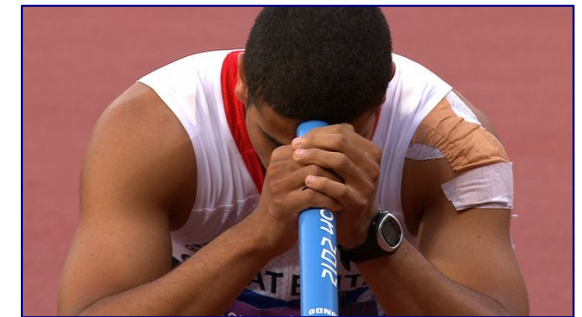
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Of striving for eternal reward, Paul writes in Corinthians 9:24-27 "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become *disqualified*. (NKJV)

He says in II Corinthians 13:5-6 "Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are *disqualified*. But I trust that you will know that we are not *disqualified*."

The NASB and ESV also use the word disqualified, in I Corinthians, but use the phrase "fail the test" in the 2nd letter.

How, once saved, could Paul become disqualified? Why would the Christians in Corinth need to examine themselves to make sure they hadn't failed the test?

I Thessalonians 3:4-8 says "For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know. For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor *might be in vain*."

If once the Thessalonians in chapter 3 had been saved, how could Paul and Silas' work ever been in vain? How could turning a person from a path to hell ever be in vain unless that person returned to the path they were following previous to being saved?

Similarly, let's look at 2 Peter 2 (NKJV). "For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (saved Christians), "they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them."

These people had escaped and known the way of righteousness, then become entangled and "overcome" and worse off than they were in the beginning. In the beginning, they weren't saved. Now, they have become worse off.

How could a person be worse off after they were saved than before they were saved unless they were no longer saved and going to heaven? Wouldn't the worst place in heaven be better than the best place in hell?

Why would Paul write in Colossians 1:21-23 about being reconciled in Christ's death in order to present the saved before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach, and then say (verse 23) "*IF*" indeed you continue in the faith and not moved away from the hope of the gospel. The "*IF*" says it's possible not to be presented holy and blameless if we don't continue in the faith.

Read Hebrews 3:12-14 – "That falls away"? Also, in verse 14 – "For we have become partakers of Christ, *if* we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm *until the end*."

Galatians 5:3-5 – Fallen from grace? That means they had grace (vs. 7 says they were running well). They were under grace. Then, they fell out of it. It does not imply that they can't, again, be reconciled. But, how can you *not* be receiving God's grace and still go to heaven? "It is by his grace we have been saved through faith." (Ephesians 2:8)

Finally, for Revelation 3:4-5 to be true, doesn't it mean that he who does not overcome will not be clothed in white garments and will have his name erased from the book of life and will not have his named confessed before God?

The Bible clearly teaches that being saved doesn't mean that you'll always be saved. That's a thought worthy of our consideration. How does it affect our lives? How do we make sure that we remain saved – that we don't lose our salvation? What do I need to be doing? What do we need to do together to help assure our mutual salvation?

It is clear that we disqualify ourselves from God's grace when we fail by our actions to live up to our covenant with God and we fail to repent and seek forgiveness from God.

Let's remember 2 Peter 3:17-18 that warns us to be on our guard and to continue to GROW in the grace and knowledge of our Lord. We don't want to disqualify ourselves from God's wonderful saving grace.