

Once Saved, Always Saved (OSAS) ? The Scripture says, "No." by Rick Thompson

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The essence of disagreement and confusion about OSAS is not with beginning faith, nor with the sovereignty of God. The essence of the debate is ultimately this: Is faith required at death? Can a person, who has had beginning faith, lose their faith? The assumption has virtually been a solid, "No!" We will examine what the multiplicity of Scripture says in this document, not the solitary verses popularized by many well-known pastors and theologians.

Why is OSAS being addressed on *Free in Christ*? The overwhelming majority of the church is enslaved to sexual sin (statistics in *The Cross Divider* show ranges from 60% for women, 70% for men [90% at a Christian men's retreat], and 76% for pastors). Many are questioning their Christian life experience, and even their salvation. OSAS is used by leadership to reassure believers that despite being ravaged by sin, they are saved. There is good reason for believers to question their salvations as Scripture will show below.

At this website, <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/basicbeliefs.asp> , the Southern Baptist Convention says the following, which is OSAS:

God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. ...All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end.

There are 2 major problems with this position:

1) "All true believers endure to the end." Based on this sentence, how can you know if you are a true believer? The answer: You will be in heaven after death. If you are not in heaven, then you were not a true believer. That is too late to help anyone. OSAS should terrorize believers, for no assurance of salvation is offered beyond an initial church stamp of approval to a declaration of faith. It assumes the Scripture gives no benchmarks for believers to examine themselves prior to death (2 Cor 13:5). In fact, the doctrine asserts, by its absence of Scripture, that benchmarks are unnecessary. And, that is what implementing the OSAS doctrine hopes to do: assure you that you are saved, but without validating you. Do the pastors and church staff help you examine yourselves after initial salvation? I have not seen any that do, who adhere to this doctrine. After your salvation, the mission of the churches appears to be filling the pews, meeting or exceeding budgets, buildings, and plugging people into church programs. "Get busy. You don't need to worry about your salvation."

2) The secondary problem is with the last sentence on the website. Let's restate it: "If God accepts you and sets you apart, you will persevere to the end and never fall away." This seems to indicate that your salvation only depends on God. In other words, if you had saving faith at the beginning and got God's approval, it does not matter whether you have saving faith at the end. No Scripture or discussion accompanies this doctrine on the above website. In fact, OSAS heavily depends on a severely restricted diet of Scripture that cannot sustain the doctrine's appetite.

So, the question is:

IS '*ONCE SAVED, ALWAYS SAVED*' SCRIPTURAL?

That depends on what you mean.

If your salvation is like the proverbial fire insurance policy that is buried in a file cabinet, only to be taken out and claimed because of your initial agreement and paid dues, then "NO, YOU ARE NOT SAVED!" What are the Scriptural precedents for such a conclusion?

- the man who buried his talent in the field, Matt 25:18
- salt thrown out to be trodden under foot by men, Matt 5:13
- the light hidden under a bushel, Matt 5:15
- lamps empty of oil, Matt 25:1-13
- self-importantly assumed salvation, but without God, Luke 14:16-24

OSAS is false, because the Scripture says it is possible to:

- believe in vain and not be saved, 1 Cor 15:2
- be spoiled through philosophy and vain deceit, Col 2:8
- be beguiled of your reward, Col 2:18
- run and labor in vain, Phil 2:16
- be tempted, so Paul's labor was in vain, 1 Th 3:5
- turn aside to vain jangling, 1 Tim 1:6
- depart from the living God, through an evil, unbelieving heart, Heb 3:12
- fall away, Heb 6:6
- sin willfully, having no more recourse, Heb 10:26
- draw back from faith to destruction, Heb 10:38-39
- discontinue and leave the faith, 1 John 2:19
- turn away so that the latter end is worse than beginning, better to never have known the way of righteousness, 2 Peter 2:20-21
- transgress and not remain in the doctrine and not have God, 2 John 1:9
- be hurt by the second death, Rev 2:11
- have your name blotted out of the book of life, Rev 3:5
- have your crown taken, Rev 3:11
- be spit out of His mouth, Rev 3:16
- not inherit all things, Rev 21:7

If, however, your faith is like a missile that, once “locked” on target (Jesus), will pursue Him to your end, then you are saved. This is because you will:

- endure to the end (to be saved), Matt 10:22
- deny yourself, take up your cross, follow Him, Mat 16:24
- bear fruit, Luke 13:9
- have faith to the end, Luke 18:8 ; Rom 11:20-22; Heb 11:13; 1 Pet 1:9
- continue in His word, John 8:31
- remain in Him, John 15:6
- suffer with Him, Rom 8:17
- wait patiently, Rom 8:25
- hold fast the message, 1 Cor 15:2
- not give up, Gal 6:9
- continue in the faith grounded and settled and not moved away from the hope of the gospel, Col 1:23
- seek those things which are above, Col 3:1
- stand fast, hold the traditions, 2 Th 2:15
- pay close attention to yourself, and to the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this you shall both save yourself and your hearers. 1 Tim 4:16
- endure, 2 Tim 2:12
- have fought the good fight, finished your course, kept the faith; 2 Tim 4:7
- hold fast the confidence and rejoice in hope firm to the end, Heb 3:6
- hold the beginning of your confidence steadfast to the end, Heb 3:14
- hold fast your profession, Heb 4:14
- hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, Heb 10:23
- be chastised, Heb 12:8
- have works, James 2:20
- walk like He did, 1 John 2:6
- retain what you have heard in the beginning, 1 John 2:24
- have confidence toward God, 1 John 3:21
- remain in the doctrine and have both the Father and the Son, 2 John 1:9
- hold fast My name, nor deny My faith, Rev 2:13
- hold fast what you already have, Rev 2:25
- receive, hear, hold fast, repent, and watch, Rev 3:3
- overcome, 2 Peter 2:20, Rev 3:5
- keep yourself clean from the world, 1 Cor 6:9-11; Gal 5:19-20; Eph 5:5-6

OSAS is a weak, unscholarly, man-made doctrine that ignores Scripture and waffles on whether ending faith is required. In fact, if OSAS was true, the above Scriptural warnings would be meaningless, irrelevant, and unnecessary. Is that what the adherents of OSAS are seeking? Whether by intent or accident, that is OSAS's outcome: a gospel that is not worth the paper upon which it is written.

Don't be fooled! Don't let people play with your salvation! Take God seriously as these Scriptures show. Examine yourselves.

Salvation is not all on God's shoulders. Here are two examples:

(20) They were broken off because of their unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be high-minded, but fear: (21) If God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you. (22) Behold the goodness and severity of God: severity on them who fell through unbelief; but goodness toward you, if you continue in His goodness through faith: otherwise you also shall be cut off. Rom 11:20-22 From verse 22: If you do not continue in faith, you shall be cut off!

(12) Therefore, my beloved, as you 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. (13) For it is God Who works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Phil 2:12-13

Your life is a partnership with God. God is working in you. And, with Him, you are working out your salvation with fear and trembling! Your work is to outwardly display His inner work. Faith and its subsequent change are required in salvation, not just at the beginning, but also at the glorious end!

The error of OSAS is so serious that the church should be helping you to be certain of your salvation. There are benchmarks that tell you whether you are standing firm in faith! The church leadership only helps you by telling you the complete Scripture, not by masking Scripture for the doctrines and purposes of men.

Marriage in relation to OSAS

Christ is the Bridegroom, and believers are His bride.

In marriage, we commit to love, respect and honor—maintain faith with our spouses—until death. Beginning and ending faith.

When one files for divorce or refuses to receive and give love, that one breaks faith and is no longer in relation with the other.

Do you think such a one gains eternal life, when the Lord Himself *is* that Life?

"Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no one comes to the Father, but by Me." John 14:6

"(39) You search the scriptures, thinking that in them you have eternal life. But, the scriptures testify of Me, (40) And you will not come to Me, that you might have life." John 5:39-40 [Eternal life is not a thing, it's Him.]

"Whoever eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, has eternal life; and I will raise him at the last day."
John 6:54

"(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show to you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us;)" 1 John 1:2 [Jesus is the Life!]

"And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." 1 John 5:11

Eternal life is Christ Himself.

No one who abandons Him and withdraws from faith has eternal life.

Ending faith is required.

You must be receiving and giving love—you must be married to the Bridegroom when you die!

If you are not in an faith relationship with Him till death, you are not married to Him, and you are not saved.