

SALVATION IS PERMANENT

A Formal Biblical Response to
Spirit & Truth Fellowship's
Revised English Version (REV)
Appendix 10:
'God's Promise of Salvation'



by Franco Bottley



THE LIVING TRUTH FELLOWSHIP

TLTF.org

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*Spirit & Truth Fellowship's
Revised English Version (REV)*

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Introduction

The Precise Question Before Us

Some doctrinal disagreements concern matters of secondary importance. Others reach directly into the heart of the gospel because they affect how we understand what God accomplished through Jesus Christ and what He gives to those who believe. Whether Christian salvation can be forfeited belongs to the second category. The issue concerns the nature of the new birth, the meaning of eternal life, the purpose of the gift of holy spirit, and whether God's saving work remains dependent upon the believer's ability to preserve it.

Revised English Version (REV) Appendix 10, "God's Promise of Salvation," presents a detailed argument that Christian salvation may be forfeited. It affirms that salvation rests upon God's grace and the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ, cannot be earned by good works, and is received by confessing Jesus as Lord and believing that God raised him from the dead. Nevertheless, the appendix teaches that a born-again Christian must continue trusting Christ to maintain salvation. If the believer later disavows that confession and abandons trust in the risen Lord, he forfeits salvation and may ultimately experience the second death. The appendix does not teach that every sin causes salvation to be lost. Its decisive issue is the believer's settled rejection of Christ.

That position deserves a serious and careful response. Those who affirm it are rightly concerned that faith in Christ should be genuine, Christians should continue trusting and obeying him, and biblical warnings must never be dismissed as empty threats. Permanent salvation does not make Christian conduct inconsequential or obedience optional, nor does a verbal profession of faith automatically prove that a person has been born of God. Christians remain accountable for their fellowship with God, obedience to

Christ, treatment of others, doctrinal faithfulness, service, fruitfulness, and future reward.

The first task is to state Appendix 10's position precisely. The appendix does not teach that a child of God literally becomes "unborn." It expressly says that a child remains a child, but contends that such a child may still be destroyed. It supports that distinction by appealing to fallen angels, who are called "sons of God" yet will ultimately perish. The controlling question is therefore whether Scripture teaches that the spiritual life imparted through the Christian new birth can end in the second death even though the person remains a child of God.

The same precision must govern the discussion of human freedom. Christians can doubt, become deceived, abandon sound doctrine, resist God's correction, deny what they once confessed, and live inconsistently with their identity in Christ. Yet the ability to change one's beliefs does not determine what happens to the saving acts God previously performed. When a person confesses Jesus as Lord and believes that God raised him from the dead, Scripture says that God gives him new birth, makes him alive with Christ, justifies and reconciles him, seals him with holy spirit, and spiritually baptizes him into the Body of Christ. The believer receives salvation through faith, but he does not create the life he receives or determine its nature.

For Appendix 10's conclusion to stand, its biblical evidence must demonstrate that someone who has genuinely received this life can nevertheless be destroyed in the second death. It must show that the new birth does not secure everlasting life, that the seal and deposit of holy spirit do not ensure the inheritance, and that reconciliation and incorporation into Christ's Body may be genuine without guaranteeing final salvation. Appendix 10 does not ordinarily describe its position as the reversal of regeneration, and this response should not attribute language to it that it

does not use. Nevertheless, its conclusion requires us to determine whether these saving realities are temporary, reversible, or insufficient to secure the life God promises.

This is where the burden of proof rests. It is not enough to show that the Bible contains the words “if,” “continue,” “endure,” “fall away,” “destroy,” or “die.” Each passage must be interpreted according to its context, audience, biblical administration, and named consequence. An “if” clause may govern fellowship, doctrinal stability, fruitful service, inheritance, reward, rulership, discipline, physical preservation, or final salvation.

The existence of a condition does not identify what is conditioned, and the severity of a warning does not determine its doctrinal category. A condition can be genuine and its consequence severe without everlasting life being at stake. The interpreter must therefore ask two questions: What does the text itself say is conditioned, and what consequence does the text itself name? We cannot move from “if you continue” to “otherwise you lose everlasting life” unless the passage itself establishes that connection.

Continuity in the means of receiving from God does not prove uniformity in what God gives in every biblical administration. Trust has always been necessary because people must believe what God has revealed, but neither the content of that revelation nor the spiritual realities God gives in response have remained identical. Abraham was not baptized into the Body of Christ, believers under the Mosaic covenant were not sealed with the promised holy spirit for the day of redemption, and no one before Christ’s resurrection could receive new birth through that resurrection. The continuity is in God’s grace and the necessity of trust; the progression is in what God made available through His accomplished work in Christ.

Christ’s death, resurrection, and exaltation were decisive events. At Pentecost the promised gift of holy spirit was poured out, the Body of Christ

came into existence, and believers became members of one new humanity. These realities must be allowed to define Christian salvation.

Likewise, Scripture's future language concerning salvation must be read alongside its declarations of present possession. Christians still await Christ's appearing, the resurrection or transformation of the body, and the full manifestation of their inheritance. Yet future completion does not necessarily imply present uncertainty. Jesus said, "*Whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life*" (John 5:24). A faithful interpretation must account for both what believers presently possess and what they still await.

This publication has a deliberately limited purpose. It is not a complete study of permanent salvation or every passage that has entered the debate. Readers seeking that broader treatment are encouraged to consult *The Permanence of Salvation: Why the New Birth Cannot Be Lost*. The present work focuses upon REV Appendix 10: its controlling premises, principal proof texts, treatment of free will and continuing faith, interpretation of biblical warnings, and understanding of the new birth, the seal, and the deposit of holy spirit.

Appendix 10 establishes that continued faith matters, believers may fail grievously, apostasy is serious, and Christian conduct carries substantial consequences. Those conclusions are not disputed. What must still be demonstrated is that later unbelief can bring the spiritual life God created to an end and subject a genuinely born-again believer to the second death. That claim must be established from Scripture rather than inferred merely from conditions, warnings, or human freedom.

What Appendix 10 Claims

Continuing Faith and the Possibility of Final Loss

Before evaluating Appendix 10, its position must be stated in its strongest form. The appendix affirms that salvation rests upon God's grace and the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ, cannot be earned through human merit, and is received by confessing Jesus as Lord and believing that God raised him from the dead. It rejects religious activity, moral achievement, and obedience to the law as means of becoming righteous before God. In these important respects, there is substantial agreement.

The disagreement concerns what happens afterward. Appendix 10 teaches that the person who genuinely believes is born again, receives holy spirit, enters the new covenant, and may rightly be described as saved. Nevertheless, salvation must be maintained through continued trust. If the believer later disavows his confession and abandons trust in the risen Lord, he forfeits salvation and may ultimately experience the second death.

The appendix does not teach that every sin causes salvation to be lost. It recognizes that believers struggle, may fail seriously, and can repent and receive forgiveness. The decisive issue is the eventual rejection of the Savior. Persistent rebellion may reveal that someone no longer trusts Christ as Lord, but it is the abandonment of that trust, not the commission of sin itself, that results in final destruction. The appendix also insists that continuing trust is not a human work. Because trust relies upon God rather than human merit, initial trust receives salvation and continuing trust maintains it.

This understanding is connected with the appendix's treatment of salvation as principally future. Christians have not yet been raised or transformed

into immortality or entered fully into the life of the coming age. Statements saying that Christians “*have been saved*” describe their present relationship to God’s promise rather than an irreversible state. A believer presently stands within that promise and would be saved if he died in faith or if Christ appeared at that moment. If his life continues, however, he must continue trusting to receive the future fulfillment.

Appendix 10 describes free will as a “two-way street”: a person is free to accept God’s offer and must remain free to reject it later. Permanent salvation is therefore viewed as inconsistent with continuing freedom because it would prevent someone who once accepted Christ from later refusing what God offered. God honors the subsequent rejection just as He honored the original acceptance.

The appendix argues that this principle operates throughout Scripture. Abraham was counted righteous because he believed; Ezekiel warned that a righteous person could turn from righteousness and die; Jesus said that the one who endured to the end would be saved; and the New Testament letters command believers to continue, hold firmly, remain faithful, and not draw back. Hebrews warns that unbelief may keep Christians from the future rest of everlasting life, while Revelation promises life to those who remain faithful until death. Appendix 10 calls this the “logic of continuity,” one message extending from Genesis through Revelation.

Its principal proof texts are interpreted within this framework. First Corinthians 15:1–2 says that believers are being saved “if” they hold firmly to the gospel and warns that they may have believed “in vain.” Galatians 4:11 and 1 Thessalonians 3:5 speak of Paul’s labor becoming vain, which the appendix considers incompatible with permanent salvation. Colossians 1:22–23 connects reconciliation and final presentation with continuing in the faith, while 1 Timothy 4:16 says that Timothy’s perseverance will save

both himself and his hearers. First Peter 1:5 is understood to mean that continuing trust accesses God's power to guard future salvation.

The warning passages are treated as descriptions of final loss rather than discipline or lost reward. Hebrews 3 and 4 warn that unbelief may prevent believers from entering God's future rest, and Hebrews 10 contrasts drawing back into destruction with preserving one's life through trust. Second Timothy 2:12 says that Christ will deny those who deny him. Second Peter 2:20–21 describes people who escaped the world through knowing Christ but became entangled again and ended worse than before. Romans 11:22 warns Gentile branches standing by trust that they may be cut off. Appendix 10 concludes that these consequences refer to the loss of everlasting life.

Romans 10:9 is also interpreted as requiring continuing belief. Although “*confess*” and “*believe*” are aorist verbs, the appendix argues that the aorist can describe continuous action, particularly outside the indicative mood. It appeals to the aorist command in 1 John 5:21, “*guard yourselves from idols,*” which calls for continuing vigilance. On that basis, Romans 10:9 is understood to require a person to maintain his confession and trust in the risen Lord.

Appendix 10 responds directly to arguments based upon the new birth and sonship. It agrees that a child of God remains a child but denies that sonship guarantees everlasting life. Fallen angels are called “sons of God” yet will be destroyed in the Lake of Fire. The appendix reasons that a Christian may likewise remain God's child while rejecting Christ, forfeiting salvation, and ultimately being destroyed. Its position is not that the believer becomes “unborn,” but that he may lose salvation even though his sonship remains.

The same conditional framework governs its treatment of the seal and deposit of holy spirit. Being sealed means bearing God's mark or stamp; it

does not mean that holy spirit is sealed inside the believer. The Greek word *arrabōn* describes a pledge or down payment rather than an unconditional guarantee in the modern sense. Because a transaction could fail when one party defaulted, the appendix understands the new covenant as a bilateral relationship. God performs His part, but a believer who abandons Christ breaks his covenant commitment and will not receive the inheritance. The appendix acknowledges that Scripture does not say whether such a person will have holy spirit when raised for judgment.

Membership in the Body of Christ is interpreted similarly. The appendix affirms that believers are spiritually united under Christ as the head, but emphasizes that the Body is a metaphor rather than a literal organism. The metaphor portrays Christians working together under Christ's direction but, in its view, does not guarantee everlasting life. Membership in the Body therefore does not prevent a believer from abandoning Christ and forfeiting salvation.

Other passages are read within the same framework. The imperishable seed of 1 Peter 1:23 is identified as the enduring Word of God, not as proof that the person born through it cannot perish. Romans 8 promises that no outside force can separate believers from God's love but leaves them free to depart by their own choice. Romans 11:29 concerns God's continuing call to Israel without preventing individuals from rejecting it. Heavenly citizenship and being seated with Christ describe present identity and union without making either impossible to renounce.

These propositions must be evaluated individually and cumulatively. Appendix 10 teaches that continued trust determines whether a genuinely born-again believer will ultimately receive everlasting life. A fair response must address the position it actually presents: not that a child of God becomes unborn, but that the child may remain a child while losing salvation and being destroyed in the second death.

Is Salvation the Same from Genesis to Revelation?

The “Logic of Continuity”

Appendix 10 builds a major part of its case upon what it calls “the logic of continuity—the same message from Genesis to Revelation.” Salvation, it argues, has always come through trusting God and continuing in that trust. Since this principle appears in the Old Testament, the teachings of Jesus, the Church Epistles, Hebrews, and Revelation, Christian salvation must remain conditional in the same essential way. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ provide the basis for salvation, but they do not, according to this position, make the new birth permanent.

There is important truth within this argument. God has always been gracious, and no one has earned everlasting life through human merit. Abraham was counted righteous because he believed God. The law revealed sin and regulated Israel’s covenant life, but it could not make anyone righteous before God. Trust in what God has revealed has always mattered, and the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ provides the basis upon which God can forgive and save.

The error occurs when continuity in God’s character and the necessity of trust are made to prove uniformity in everything God gives to those who believe. The fact that people in every age have needed God’s grace does not mean that every biblical administration provides the same spiritual identity, relationship to holy spirit, covenantal standing, or blessings. God does not change in His character, but He has progressively revealed and accomplished His redemptive purpose. The unchanging One may introduce something genuinely new when His plan reaches a new stage.

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ were not merely additional events within an otherwise unchanged arrangement. Before Jesus died, the sacrifice that paid for humanity's sin had not been offered. Before God raised him from the dead, no one could believe in his resurrection. Before Jesus was exalted to God's right hand, the promised gift of holy spirit had not been poured out. Before Pentecost, the Body of Christ did not exist.

These distinctions do not create different gods, standards of righteousness, or competing means of salvation. The content of trust corresponds to what God has revealed and made available at a particular time. Abraham trusted God's promise concerning his offspring. Israelites under the Mosaic covenant were called to trust Yahweh and live faithfully within that covenant. During his earthly ministry, Jesus called Israel to repent and believe the good news of the Kingdom. After God raised him from the dead, the apostles proclaimed the risen Jesus as Lord and Messiah.

Romans 10:9 could not have been the saving confession in Genesis because the events it declares had not yet occurred: *"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved"* (Romans 10:9). The gracious principle of receiving from God through trust remains, but neither the revelation believed nor the spiritual realities God provides are identical in every age.

Appendix 10 argues that Romans 10:9 requires continuous believing because "confess" and "believe" are aorist verbs and an aorist outside the indicative mood can describe continuous action. It compares them with the aorist command "guard yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21), which plainly requires more than one moment of vigilance. The comparison, however, does not establish the proposed meaning. The aorist can summarize an action of any duration, but it normally views that action as a whole rather than marking it as continuous or repeated. The continuing practical force of "guard yourselves" comes from the nature of the command and what

guarding requires, not from an inherently continuous meaning in the aorist form.

The two passages also use different moods and perform different functions. First John 5:21 gives a command; Romans 10:9 states a condition followed by the promise “you will be saved.” The aorist subjunctives in Romans do not specify that confession and belief must continue until death. They present confession and belief as the condition upon which God promises salvation. Grammar alone cannot determine whether the salvation then received remains permanent, but it does not justify adding lifelong continuation to what Romans 10:9 says.

John explicitly distinguished the gift believers would receive after Christ’s glorification from what was available during Jesus’ earthly ministry:

“Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” By this he meant the spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified (John 7:38–39).

John did not mean that God had never empowered anyone by spirit. The Old Testament records spirit coming upon people for prophecy, leadership, craftsmanship, strength, and other purposes. The point is that believers would later receive something connected specifically with Christ’s glorification. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter explained, *“Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised holy spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear”* (Acts 2:33). The Messiah was exalted, and the promised gift was poured out.

Peter connected the new birth directly with Christ’s resurrection: *“In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”* (1 Peter 1:3). Paul described believers as a *“new creation”* (2 Corinthians 5:17) and said that God *“made*

us alive with Christ” and *“raised us up with Christ*” (Ephesians 2:5–6). These declarations describe a spiritual reality God brought into existence through His risen Son, not merely the continuation of an earlier covenant arrangement under a different name.

The Body of Christ is another new reality. Christ’s purpose was *“to create in himself one new humanity out of the two”* (Ephesians 2:15). Paul identified the previously hidden truth that Gentiles are *“members together of one body”* in Christ (Ephesians 3:6), and he explained how that membership occurs: *“For we were all baptized by one spirit so as to form one body”* (1 Corinthians 12:13). God spiritually incorporates believers into Christ’s Body.

Appendix 10 correctly observes that the Body of Christ is a metaphor rather than a literal physical organism. That does not make the spiritual relationship it describes unreal or reduce it to Christians merely cooperating under Christ’s direction. Biblical metaphors communicate genuine realities, and Paul grounds this one in God’s act of baptizing believers into one Body. Calling the Body a metaphor prevents us from pressing it into literal anatomy, but it does not determine whether the spiritual relationship represented by that metaphor is temporary or permanent. The metaphor alone does not prove permanence, but neither does its figurative character prove revocability. Appendix 10 must still show from Scripture that the spiritual incorporation represented by the metaphor can cease.

The necessity of trust in every age therefore does not establish that someone born through Christ’s resurrection and baptized into his Body remains under precisely the same conditions as people who lived before those realities existed. Nor does it establish that someone sealed with the promised gift of holy spirit is governed in every respect by examples involving people who were never sealed in that manner. Continuity in God’s grace must not be made to erase progression in His redemptive work.

Appendix 10 appeals especially to Ezekiel 18 and 33. Ezekiel warns that a righteous person who turns from righteousness and practices wickedness will die, while a wicked person who turns from wickedness and does what is right will live. These passages establish personal responsibility and the seriousness of turning away from God. No one can rely upon former obedience while embracing rebellion, and no wicked person is beyond God's mercy when he genuinely turns from his evil way.

The immediate setting, however, concerns Israel under the Mosaic covenant and God's judgment upon the nation. Ezekiel corrects the people's attempt to blame their suffering upon previous generations and insists that each person is accountable for his own conduct. The passages do not discuss the Christian new birth, spiritual baptism into Christ, the promised gift of holy spirit, or sealing for the day of redemption. They therefore do not answer the disputed question of whether someone who receives those post-Pentecost realities can remain God's child while losing everlasting life and experiencing the second death.

Appendix 10 moves from Ezekiel's valid principle of covenant accountability to the broader conclusion that Christian salvation is forfeitable. That conclusion does not come from Ezekiel itself; it depends upon the prior assumption that the new birth provides no greater permanence than the standing of a righteous Israelite under the Mosaic covenant. A passage addressing accountability under one administration cannot, by itself, establish the nature or duration of spiritual realities that did not yet exist.

The same distinction applies to Habakkuk 2:4: "*The righteous person will live by his faithfulness.*" Appendix 10 treats the use of this statement in Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, and Hebrews 10:38 as one continuous rule requiring faithfulness until death. In Romans and Galatians, however, Paul uses Habakkuk to establish that righteousness comes through trust rather

than works of the law: “*Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because ‘the righteous will live by faith’*” (Galatians 3:11). The quotation establishes continuity in the gracious principle of trust; it does not establish that every spiritual benefit received through trust is identical or equally revocable in every administration. Hebrews 10:38 will be considered with the warning passages.

Appendix 10 also appeals to Jesus’ statements that “*the one who stands firm to the end will be saved*” (Matthew 10:22; 24:13), interpreting “the end” as the end of the person’s life. These words must be respected within their settings. In Matthew 10, Jesus was sending Israelite disciples to the lost sheep of Israel to proclaim that the Kingdom had drawn near. Matthew 24 concerns persecution and events connected with the end of the age. Both passages emphasize faithful endurance, but neither explains how the later Christian new birth is preserved or lost.

Trust and endurance were necessary before Pentecost, and they remain necessary afterward. Christians are called to stand firm, resist deception, endure hardship, obey their Lord, and remain faithful in service. The distinction is not between an earlier age in which faithfulness mattered and a present age in which it does not. The question is what faithfulness governs. It may affect fellowship, spiritual growth, fruitfulness, testimony, reward, inheritance privileges, and rulership without functioning as the power that keeps eternal life in existence.

Appendix 10 asks why the finished work of Christ would provide permanent salvation for Christians but not salvation in precisely the same manner for every person in every age. The answer is that a common redemptive basis does not require an identical application of every redemptive benefit. Christ’s sacrifice provides the foundation for the salvation of all who will receive everlasting life, including those who lived before his death. Yet Scripture never says that Abraham was baptized into

the Body of Christ, Moses was part of the one new humanity, or David was sealed with the promised gift of holy spirit for the day of redemption.

The “logic of continuity” therefore proves less than Appendix 10 requires. It establishes that God is consistently gracious, no one earns everlasting life, trust has always mattered, and God’s people are called to remain faithful. It does not establish that the spiritual realities available after Pentecost are identical to those available before Christ’s resurrection or that warnings under the Mosaic covenant determine the permanence of the Christian new birth.

A faithful reading must preserve both continuity and progression. The same God who called people to trust Him throughout Scripture fulfilled His redemptive purpose through Christ’s death, resurrection, exaltation, the outpouring of holy spirit, and the creation of the Body of Christ. The permanence of Christian salvation does not deny the unity of God’s purpose; it recognizes what He made new in His risen Son.

Is Salvation Merely a Future Possibility?

Present Possession and Future Completion

Appendix 10 argues that complete Christian salvation is principally future. Christians have not yet been raised or transformed, given immortal bodies, delivered from the wrath to come, or brought into the fullness of life in the coming age. It therefore understands a believer as “saved” in the present only in the sense that he presently stands within God’s promise. If he later abandons his trust in Christ, he will not receive the promised salvation.

The future dimension of salvation is an important biblical truth. Christians remain mortal, and those who have died still await resurrection. Living believers await transformation at Christ’s appearing, and all believers await the redemption of the body and the full manifestation of everlasting life. The question is whether the future completion of salvation means that the spiritual life God has already given remains provisional until then.

Scripture uses salvation language for more than one aspect of God’s saving work. It speaks of what God has already accomplished, what believers presently experience, and what He will complete in the future. God has justified, reconciled, and made the believer alive in Christ. He presently works within His children as they learn to live according to the life He has given. He will complete His saving purpose by raising or transforming their bodies and bringing them into the fullness of the coming age. These dimensions belong together, but they must not be collapsed into a single event.

Future completion does not by itself establish present uncertainty. The issue is not whether every aspect of salvation has already appeared, but whether

Scripture presents God's completed acts as temporary states that can be reversed.

Jesus spoke of eternal life as a present possession:

"Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life" (John 5:24).

The believer has eternal life, will not come into judgment, and has crossed from death to life. The present description of the one who believes should not be ignored, and this verse alone does not answer every warning about unbelief. Nevertheless, Jesus does not say that the believer merely qualifies for life that will be given later. Nor does he describe a repeated movement between life and death. To make the crossing reversible, that reversal must be established from other passages rather than inserted into this one.

Jesus says just as plainly, *"Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life"* (John 6:47). John later writes, *"God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. Whoever has the Son has life"* (1 John 5:11–12). He explains that he wrote to believers *"so that you may know that you have eternal life"* (1 John 5:13). Taken together, these passages describe more than present eligibility for a future gift. God has given life in His Son, and those who have the Son possess that life now.

Appendix 10 can account for this language by saying that believers truly have life in their present state, while also maintaining that their state may later change. That reading preserves a form of present assurance, but it makes final assurance necessarily provisional. A believer may know that he has not yet forfeited salvation, but he cannot know that he will finally be saved because he cannot know whether he will continue trusting until death. John's language grounds assurance in God's testimony about what He has given, not in the believer's ability to predict his own future faithfulness. This

contrast does not settle every warning passage, but it identifies what is at stake in their interpretation.

Paul likewise describes salvation as something God has accomplished. He writes:

“But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved” (Ephesians 2:4–5).

He repeats, *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God”* (Ephesians 2:8). Appendix 10 treats “have been saved” as proleptic language—speaking of a future fulfillment as though it had already occurred. Biblical writers can indeed describe a certain future event in completed terms, so verb tense alone should not be asked to prove permanence. In Ephesians 2, however, the surrounding explanation is not limited to a future promise. God “made us alive with Christ,” and the construction translated *“you have been saved”* presents that saving act as completed with a continuing result. Calling the statement proleptic does not explain away the completed action in its immediate context.

In the same passage, Paul says that God *“raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus”* (Ephesians 2:6). These expressions describe the believer’s spiritual identification with Christ, not a bodily resurrection that has already occurred. Yet figurative or representative language can express a real relationship. The believer’s future bodily experience rests upon a union God has already established. The coming ages will display *“the incomparable riches of His grace”* toward those in Christ (Ephesians 2:7); they are not presented as the time when God will determine whether His act of making them alive remained valid.

The same pattern of present reality and future completion appears in Paul's description of heavenly citizenship. Paul writes, "*But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ*" (Philippians 3:20). He immediately connects that present citizenship with the believer's future bodily transformation, when Christ "*will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body*" (Philippians 3:21). Paul treats that citizenship as already possessed, while the bodily transformation associated with that hope remains ahead.

Appendix 10 argues that this citizenship may later be renounced, but Philippians does not describe such a cancellation. Nothing in the passage says that a believer may cease to be a heavenly citizen or explains how that status would be revoked. The possibility must therefore be established from another text rather than read back into Paul's statement. Philippians 3:20 does not by itself prove that heavenly citizenship is irrevocable, but neither does it provide evidence that it is temporary. Paul states the citizenship; Appendix 10 must demonstrate its cancellation.

Romans 5 holds present justification and future deliverance together: "*Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!*" (Romans 5:9). Paul openly places salvation from future wrath ahead of the believer. The future tense by itself does not prove certainty; Paul's "how much more" reasoning does. It moves from accomplished justification to confident future deliverance and grounds that deliverance in what God has already done through Christ.

Paul continues, "*For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!*" (Romans 5:10). Reconciliation has occurred; salvation in its future fullness remains ahead. Paul's point is that if God reconciled people while they were His enemies, He will much more save those who have been reconciled through the life of the risen Christ. The

appendix's interpretation requires an unstated exception: a reconciled person who later ceases to trust will become unreconciled and will not receive that future salvation. The warning passages must be examined seriously, but Romans 5 itself grounds the future in God's completed action rather than in a newly stated condition.

Romans 8 develops the same confidence. Paul writes, "*Those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified*" (Romans 8:30). Glorification remains future in experience, yet the same people who are justified are described as glorified within God's saving purpose. Paul does not identify a second group within the verse—people once justified but ultimately excluded from glorification. Whether the final verb is understood as emphasizing certainty or the believer's identification with Christ, the sequence gives no indication that justification is provisional.

The verses that follow place the believer's confidence in God's work. The God who did not spare His own Son will graciously give His people all things (Romans 8:31–32). God is the One who justifies, and Christ died, was raised, is at God's right hand, and intercedes for believers (Romans 8:33–34). Paul's assurance rests upon the verdict of God and the completed and continuing ministry of Christ. A theology of forfeiture must show from other texts that a believer's later rejection can reverse that verdict, because Paul does not introduce that qualification here.

Present sonship and future bodily completion are also held together in this chapter. Paul says that believers received the spirit of adoption, by which they cry, "*Abba, Father,*" and that the spirit testifies with their spirit that they are God's children (Romans 8:15–16). Later he says that those who have the firstfruits of the spirit eagerly await "*our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies*" (Romans 8:23). The future aspect of adoption is

its bodily completion and public manifestation; it does not cancel the reality that believers are God's children now.

John makes the same distinction: *"Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is"* (1 John 3:2). Present identity and future transformation are both real. Future likeness to Christ does not create sonship; it reveals its fullness.

Appendix 10 agrees that a child of God remains a child, but argues that a rebellious child may nevertheless be destroyed, comparing such a person with the fallen angels. Present sonship, therefore, is not offered here as a complete argument by itself. It narrows the question: Does the New Testament teach that one who remains God's born-again child can lose the eternal life already given and be destroyed? The mere fact that bodily transformation remains future does not answer that question.

First Peter 1:3–5 brings these themes together. Peter says that God *"has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you"* (1 Peter 1:3–4). The new birth has been given; the inheritance awaits its future unveiling. Peter distinguishes them without making either unreal. The inheritance is imperishable and kept by God.

Peter then describes believers as those *"who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time"* (1 Peter 1:5). The words *"through faith"* have real force. Faith is the instrumental means through which believers are guarded, and nothing in the verse encourages indifference to continuing trust. The appendix is therefore right to insist that the phrase must not be passed over.

The stronger conclusion, however, does not follow from the phrase alone. Peter identifies God's power as the guarding agent and faith as the means; he does not say that faith preserves the new birth by keeping it from being revoked. Nor does this verse describe what happens if a professing believer later falls into unbelief. That question must be answered from the warning passages and their contexts. In this passage, God has given the new birth, keeps the inheritance, and guards believers by His power through faith for a salvation already *"ready to be revealed."* The future salvation awaits revelation, but Peter does not present the new birth as awaiting confirmation.

Paul expresses similar confidence when he writes that *"He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 1:6). Believers are still commanded to stand firm, obey, and endure. Such commands are indispensable to Christian discipleship, but their existence does not by itself prove that regeneration can be cancelled.

The language of having been saved, being saved, and yet being saved in the future must therefore be interpreted in context. Sometimes salvation refers to justification and new life already received. Elsewhere it concerns God's continuing work in His people. Still elsewhere it points to resurrection, bodily transformation, and deliverance from future wrath. These uses describe distinguishable aspects of one saving purpose; they do not require the conclusion that the believer's new life remains unsettled.

First Corinthians 15:1–2, for example, says that the Corinthians are saved by the gospel *"if"* they hold firmly to the message Paul preached. That condition has real force and should not be softened. Yet the chapter also addresses a denial of the resurrection that would empty the Corinthians' profession of its gospel content. A later chapter will examine whether Paul is teaching that genuine regeneration can be revoked, exposing belief that was vain from the beginning, or warning about the destructive

consequences of abandoning the gospel. The conclusion cannot simply be assumed from the presence of the word “*if*.”

Appendix 10 is correct that Christians have not yet received everything salvation includes. They still await Christ’s appearing, the resurrection or transformation of the body, the full inheritance, and the public manifestation of sonship. The appendix is also right to take seriously the biblical commands to continue in faith. What has not yet been established is that future fulfillment makes present life revocable.

Future salvation is not merely a possibility that may or may not become real. It is the completion of a saving work God has already begun. The final manifestation remains ahead, but its foundation has been established in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and in God’s acts of justification, reconciliation, new birth, and the gift of holy spirit. The future completes that work and reveals its fullness; it does not confer reality on what God has already done.

Can Free Will Reverse the New Birth?

Human Choice and Divine Action

Appendix 10 describes salvation as a freewill choice and argues that freewill choices are necessarily a “two-way street.” A person may freely accept God’s offer, but he must remain free to reject it later. According to this reasoning, permanent salvation would prevent God from honoring the subsequent choice of someone who no longer wishes to trust Christ.

The appendix does not claim that such a person ceases to be God’s child. It explicitly agrees that a child of God remains a child, but argues that a rebellious child may nevertheless be destroyed in the Lake of Fire. Its position is therefore more precise than saying that the new birth is simply reversed. It separates permanent sonship from permanent salvation: the birth remains real, but the eternal life promised through Christ may still be forfeited.

Christians unquestionably retain the ability to make meaningful choices. The new birth does not compel anyone to trust, love, obey, worship, or serve God. Believers may resist His will, reject sound doctrine, abandon fellowship, refuse correction, deny what they once confessed, and live in serious rebellion. Scripture warns Christians against these possibilities. The question is not whether their freedom continues, but whether freedom itself proves that God’s gift of everlasting life must remain revocable.

That conclusion does not follow from the nature of free will. The ability to make a genuine choice does not include sovereignty over every consequence of that choice. A decision can be freely made even when its results cannot later be undone. Human freedom explains how a person responds to God’s

offer; it does not determine the nature of what God gives in response. If God declares His gift permanent, that permanence does not make the original faith involuntary. It means God, rather than the recipient, determines the character of His gift.

Nor does permanence compel a believer to love or obey God. A person may reject God's authority and refuse fellowship with Him without gaining control over what God has already created. Scripture does not treat every consequence of human choice as subject to later cancellation, and God's honoring of freedom does not require Him to make His own gifts temporary.

This distinction is especially important because the believer does not produce his own salvation. He believes the gospel, but he does not create spiritual life, justify himself, reconcile himself to God, or make himself a child of God. Faith is the means of reception; it is not the act of creation itself. The believer trusts, and God gives life.

John places the human response and divine action side by side:

"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God" (John 1:12–13).

People receive Christ and believe in his name, but the birth itself does not originate in human decision. They are *"born of God."* Their faith is genuine and necessary, yet God is the One who brings the new life into existence. John does not assign the nature or duration of God's act to the human will that received it.

James makes the same distinction: *"He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all He created"* (James 1:18). God is again the acting subject. Paul likewise says that God *"made us*

alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions” (Ephesians 2:5). Human faith receives; God begets, creates, and makes alive. A philosophical claim about what free will must permit cannot decide whether those divine acts are permanent.

First Peter 1:23 must be used with similar care. Peter writes, *“For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God”* (1 Peter 1:23). Appendix 10 correctly observes that the following quotation from Isaiah contrasts perishable flesh with the Word that endures forever (1 Peter 1:24–25). That connection makes its identification of the imperishable seed with the Word a serious contextual reading.

The wording, however, distinguishes being born “from” imperishable seed and “through” the living and enduring Word. The passage can therefore be understood as presenting the Word as the means through which God imparts His imperishable life without requiring the Word and the seed to be identical in every respect. This verse should not be made to prove the whole doctrine by itself. In either reading, it describes a birth God has accomplished from an imperishable divine source through His enduring Word, not a provisional human achievement. Identifying the imperishable seed with the Word answers what the seed represents; it does not establish that the new birth itself is provisional or that the life God imparts can later be extinguished.

One of the most important passages is 1 John 3:9:

“No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God” (1 John 3:9).

John is not teaching sinless perfection. Earlier he writes, *“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us”* (1 John 1:8). In

chapter 3, he is contrasting the defining character of those born of God with the practice of sin associated with the Devil. God's seed is His gift of holy spirit, the holy nature created within the believer at the new birth. The believer can sin and resist the life God has given, but sin does not originate in that holy seed.

The statement "*God's seed remains in them*" is particularly significant. John identifies the continuing presence of God's seed as a defining reality of the new birth. He does not say that the seed remains only while the believer continues consenting to its presence, nor does he describe the seed departing when a believer becomes unfaithful. This verse does not explain every consequence of apostasy, but it does provide a direct statement about the abiding divine reality within the person born of God.

Paul describes the same transformation as a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) and a new self "*created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness*" (Ephesians 4:24). These expressions are not merely titles assigned to someone who has adopted a new religious opinion. They describe a work God has brought into existence. A believer may live inconsistently with that work, but Scripture distinguishes inconsistency in the believer's conduct from the destruction of what God created.

Appendix 10 attempts to demonstrate that distinction differently through the fallen angels. It reasons that angels are called "sons of God," yet rebellious angels will be destroyed; therefore, a born-again son or daughter of God may also retain the family designation while losing everlasting life. Even if the future destruction of the fallen angels is granted, the comparison does not establish the conclusion.

Angels are called "sons of God" because God created them, but Scripture never says that they received the Christian new birth, were begotten through faith in the risen Christ, received the gift of holy spirit, or were made

members of Christ's Body. The expression "sons of God" does not require every group bearing it to possess the same spiritual origin, covenant standing, or promise. The destiny of rebellious angels therefore cannot determine the destiny of people to whom God has given new birth through the gospel. A shared title is not enough to establish an identical kind of sonship or an identical basis of judgment.

Permanent salvation does not mean that God disregards the believer's later choices. A Christian's decisions can have severe consequences. Sin can destroy fellowship, harden the heart, damage others, ruin a ministry, disqualify someone from service, bring shame upon the gospel, forfeit reward, and invite divine discipline. Security does not make rebellion harmless; it places its consequences within the relationship God has established rather than making every failure a threat to the believer's existence.

The New Testament accordingly commands believers to "*live a life worthy of the calling*" they have received (Ephesians 4:1), to put off their former way of life and "*put on the new self*" (Ephesians 4:22–24), and to set their minds on things above because their life is hidden with Christ in God (Colossians 3:1–3). These commands arise from an identity already given. Christians are not told to preserve the existence of the new self; they are told to live according to it.

The distinction between receiving salvation and living faithfully after receiving it is therefore essential. No one is born again apart from genuine belief in the risen Lord. Continued trust is also central to Christian growth, obedience, fellowship, and fruitfulness. Yet the fact that faith receives salvation does not establish that faith must continually keep spiritual life from expiring. A condition for receiving a gift does not automatically become a condition for retaining it. That question must be answered from what the Giver says about the gift.

Appendix 10 is right that trust is not meritorious labor. The issue is not whether continued trust should be reclassified as a work. The issue is whether God made continued trust until the end the condition that prevents a born-again child from being destroyed. Calling the condition “trust” rather than “works” does not prove that Scripture assigns it that function.

Paul holds human responsibility and divine action together when he tells believers to work out their salvation with reverence, *“for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose”* (Philippians 2:12–13). Christians must respond, obey, and cooperate with God. Yet even their desire and ability to serve arise from His work within them. The Christian life is neither passive nor sustained by independent human resolve.

The free-will argument therefore cannot settle the permanence of salvation. A believer remains free to obey or rebel, confess or deny, serve or withdraw. Appendix 10 itself acknowledges that none of those choices erases the parent-child relationship. The remaining question is whether Scripture teaches that a person who remains God’s born-again child and in whom God’s seed remains can nevertheless lose the eternal life God has given and suffer the second death.

That conclusion must be demonstrated from the biblical warning passages; it cannot be inferred merely from the existence of free will. The chapters that follow will examine whether those passages actually place eternal life at risk or address other consequences of unbelief and disobedience.

Romans 8:38–39 presents another difficulty for the claim that human freedom requires salvation to remain revocable. Paul writes that he is convinced that neither death nor life, angels nor demons, the present nor the future, any powers, height nor depth, *“nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our*

Lord.” Appendix 10 interprets this as protection only from outside forces, leaving the believer free to separate himself by his own choice. But Paul does not limit his conclusion to outside forces. His list deliberately expands until it reaches the comprehensive expression “*anything else in all creation.*”

The passage does not specifically discuss the hypothetical act of a believer renouncing Christ, so it should not be made to say more than Paul says. Yet neither does Paul state the exception Appendix 10 requires: “nothing can separate us except ourselves.” That exception is supplied by the forfeiture argument, not by Romans 8. Paul’s point is the security of God’s love in Christ against every created threat he can name; the text does not identify the believer’s future choice as the unstated exception to that assurance.

God does not violate human freedom by giving a permanent gift. The person freely believes, and God freely gives life according to His promise. Human choice remains meaningful because it profoundly affects fellowship, faithfulness, service, fruitfulness, discipline, and reward. What it does not do, unless Scripture clearly says otherwise, is make the life God creates dependent upon the believer’s ability to preserve it.

What Do Paul's Conditional Statements Actually Mean?

The Meaning of "If"

Appendix 10 gives considerable weight to Paul's conditional statements. It cites passages containing words such as "if," "continue," "hold firmly," "persevere," and "endure," then concludes that final salvation depends upon continued faith. These passages deserve careful attention. Paul did not use conditional language casually, and his warnings must retain their full force.

The presence of a condition, however, does not by itself identify what is conditioned or what will be lost if the condition is not met. An "if" clause joins a condition to a consequence, so the interpreter must determine what consequence the sentence actually names. Continued faith may govern doctrinal stability, deliverance from deception, spiritual maturity, faithful service, a blameless presentation before Christ, reward, rulership, or participation in covenant privilege. Eternal life should be regarded as the consequence only when the context establishes it.

The same principle applies to an implied opposite. If endurance leads to reigning, failure to endure may mean the loss of reigning. It does not follow that failure to endure results in the second death unless the passage makes that connection. Appendix 10 repeatedly moves from a real condition to the further conclusion that regeneration is no longer sufficient for everlasting life. That conclusion must be demonstrated, not assumed.

One of its principal passages is 1 Corinthians 15:1-2:

"Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this

gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:1–2).

Appendix 10 understands Paul to mean that the Corinthians received salvation through faith but would retain it only if they continued holding firmly to the gospel. If they abandoned the resurrection message, their former faith would become vain and their salvation would be forfeited. The condition is real. Paul expects believers to hold firmly to the apostolic message, and abandoning its essential content would be a grave failure. The expression translated "*you are saved*" or "*you are being saved*" describes the gospel's present saving effect, but its grammatical form does not identify what happens to the new birth if that message is abandoned.

The rest of the chapter explains what was threatening that message. Some of the Corinthians were saying that there was no resurrection of the dead. Paul responds that if the dead are not raised, Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, apostolic preaching and Christian faith are useless, believers remain in their sins, and those who died in Christ have perished. "*If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins*" (1 Corinthians 15:17).

Paul's language of vain or futile faith is therefore inseparable from the historical truth of Christ's resurrection. If Christ was not raised, believing the gospel would accomplish nothing because the message itself would be false. If the Corinthians denied the resurrection while claiming to retain the gospel, they would empty their confession of the event upon which its saving truth rests. The phrase "*believed in vain*" need not imply that their original response was insincere; it warns that faith separated from the true gospel is empty and without its intended result.

This interpretation does not make their danger merely intellectual. Abandoning the resurrection would corrupt their hope, conduct, witness,

worship, and reason for enduring suffering. Yet Paul does not say that a born-again believer who abandons this essential doctrine will therefore suffer the second death. The conditional statement establishes the necessity of holding the true apostolic message. The additional claim concerning final destruction must come from somewhere else.

Appendix 10 finds similar evidence in Paul's fear that his labor might prove vain. He tells the Galatians, *"I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you"* (Galatians 4:11). The appendix reasons that if salvation were permanent, Paul's ministry could never have been wasted because the Galatians would still possess everlasting life.

Paul's labor, however, involved much more than bringing people to initial faith. The Galatians had received the gift of holy spirit by believing what they heard, but they were now turning toward legal bondage and trying to complete by human effort what had begun through holy spirit (Galatians 3:2–3). Paul still calls them God's children and heirs, reminding them that God sent the spirit of His Son into their hearts (Galatians 4:6–7). He then describes the continuing purpose of his ministry: *"My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you"* (Galatians 4:19).

Paul feared that his work of establishing them in freedom, truth, and Christlike maturity might be wasted. Their return to bondage could frustrate that purpose without erasing every spiritual result of his ministry. Indeed, his continued description of them as children and heirs shows that their dangerous conduct contradicted an identity he still affirmed.

First Thessalonians 3:5 expresses a related concern. While the believers were enduring persecution, Paul sent Timothy to learn about their faith because he feared that the tempter had tempted them and that his labor might have been in vain. Timothy returned with good news, and Paul continued

praying that he might supply what was lacking in their faith and that God would strengthen their hearts (1 Thessalonians 3:6–13). The alternatives in the context are instability or steadfastness under pressure. A ministry may fail to produce mature, faithful disciples without erasing the new birth God gave when they believed.

Colossians 1:21–23 contains Appendix 10's strongest grammatical argument:

“Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now He has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation—if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel” (Colossians 1:21–23).

Appendix 10 connects *“if you continue in your faith”* with the main statement, *“He has reconciled you.”* It concludes that believers remain reconciled only if they continue and that those who do not continue become unreconciled and forfeit everlasting life. The condition unquestionably belongs to Paul’s sentence and cannot be dismissed. The question is whether the appendix’s implied reversal is the only consequence the syntax permits.

Paul first declares reconciliation as something God has accomplished through Christ’s death. He then states its purpose: *“to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation.”* The condition follows that stated purpose and requires continued stability in the gospel. It can therefore be understood as governing the faithful presentation toward which reconciliation is directed rather than making reconciliation dependent for its continued existence upon ongoing faith.

Paul uses similar language when he describes the purpose of his ministry: *“He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ”* (Colossians

1:28). Continued faith is essential if believers are to become established and reach the mature, blameless presentation God intends. Those who abandon the gospel cannot arrive at that presentation as faithful believers.

Even if the condition is taken as qualifying the entire sentence, Paul does not state the appendix's implied corollary: "If you do not continue, God will reverse your reconciliation and destroy you." The condition may identify those who continue in the reconciling gospel and reach its intended outcome without explaining that failure to continue cancels God's completed act.

Grammar can establish a condition, but it cannot supply an unstated consequence. Paul explicitly says, "*if you continue in your faith*," but he does not say that failure to continue reverses reconciliation or results in the second death. If Appendix 10 wishes to make final destruction the consequence of failing to continue, that conclusion must be demonstrated from the context rather than assumed from the existence of the condition. A grammatical condition does not authorize the interpreter to supply a theological consequence that the sentence itself never names.

First Timothy 4:16 presents a different use of salvation language:

"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers" (1 Timothy 4:16).

Appendix 10 understands this as a direct warning that Timothy must persevere to receive final salvation and that his hearers may attain everlasting life through his faithful teaching. The verb "*save*" can refer to everlasting-life salvation, and Timothy's sound teaching could certainly lead unbelieving hearers to faith in Christ. The word can also describe rescue from immediate danger, and the danger throughout this chapter is false teaching. Paul warns that some will depart from the faith and follow

deceiving spirits, then charges Timothy to reject error, train himself in godliness, set an example, and devote himself to teaching.

By watching his life and doctrine, Timothy would protect himself from corruption and rescue his hearers from deception. That deliverance has eternal importance, but the verse does not say that failure in Timothy's ministry would cause him or born-again hearers to suffer the second death. It describes the saving effect of faithful ministry without defining the consequence of failure as final destruction.

Paul's statement in 2 Timothy 2:11–13 is more solemn:

“If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful, for he cannot disown himself” (2 Timothy 2:11–13).

Appendix 10 emphasizes that Christ will deny “us,” not merely deny us rewards. That observation deserves full weight. Christ's denial is personal and severe, and the warning should not be reduced to a trivial loss. Yet the structure of the saying must also be preserved. Dying with Christ leads to living with him. Enduring leads to reigning with him. Denying him leads to being denied, and human faithlessness does not make Christ unfaithful.

In Paul's letters, dying with Christ describes the believer's union with him and grounds the promise of future life (Romans 6:5–8). The next statement does not make endurance the condition for remaining alive; it makes endurance the condition for reigning. The corresponding denial can therefore concern Christ's refusal to acknowledge, approve, or entrust rulership to the person who denied him. The text does not supply an object after “disown us,” so this interpretation should not be asserted merely by inserting the word “rewards.” It arises from the contrast between living and reigning within the complete saying.

The final line must be handled just as carefully. “*He remains faithful*” does not mean Christ overlooks denial or refuses to judge unfaithfulness. He remains faithful to his promises, his standards, and his righteous evaluation. Appendix 10 is right that his faithfulness includes judgment. It does not follow that the judgment named here is the second death. The passage promises life to those who died with Christ, conditions reigning upon endurance, and warns that Christ will deny those who deny him without identifying that denial as the loss of everlasting life.

Romans 11:20–22 contains another serious condition:

“You stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but tremble. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you either. Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in His kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off” (Romans 11:20–22).

Appendix 10 interprets being grafted into the olive tree as receiving salvation and being cut off as forfeiting it. The wider context, however, concerns Israel and the Gentiles within God’s redemptive purpose. The root is connected with the promises given to the patriarchs. Natural branches were broken off through unbelief, and Gentile branches were grafted in as the gospel and its blessings extended to them. Paul warns Gentiles not to mistake their privileged position for proof of superiority.

The warning may be applied to individuals as well as to Gentiles collectively, but membership in this olive tree cannot simply be equated with the Christian new birth. The natural branches represent Israelites whose covenant identity did not itself mean that every individual was born of God, sealed with holy spirit, or incorporated into Christ’s Body. Likewise, being grafted into Paul’s olive-tree metaphor cannot automatically be equated with the specific spiritual realities of Christian regeneration.

Being cut off is therefore a real loss of participation and privilege, but the metaphor does not identify that loss as the removal of holy spirit or final destruction. Paul says that broken branches may be grafted in again if they do not persist in unbelief (Romans 11:23). The image describes exclusion and restoration within God's unfolding redemptive dealings. It does not explain that a born-again believer who is cut off will suffer the second death.

Romans 11:29 should be handled with the same care: *"for God's gifts and His call are irrevocable."* Appendix 10 correctly observes that the immediate context concerns God's continuing purposes toward Israel and that this verse should not be isolated as though it were, by itself, a complete proof that individual Christian salvation is permanent. Paul is demonstrating that God has not abandoned His purposes and calling regarding Israel despite widespread unbelief.

That contextual observation, however, proves less than Appendix 10 requires. Showing that Romans 11:29 is not a standalone proof of permanent salvation does not establish that a person who has been born of God can later lose everlasting life and suffer the second death. At most, it limits what this particular verse can be made to prove. Refuting one argument for permanent salvation is not the same as proving that salvation can be forfeited. The disputed question must still be answered from passages that actually address the new birth, eternal life, holy spirit, God's seal, and the believer's final destiny.

Taken together, Paul's conditional statements are neither empty warnings nor identical statements about eternal destiny. They urge believers to preserve the true gospel, resist deception, remain established, mature in Christ, serve faithfully, endure suffering, and use their privileges humbly. Failure can result in doctrinal ruin, bondage, wasted ministry, loss of faithful presentation, Christ's disapproval, forfeited rulership, and removal from covenant privilege. None of these consequences is insignificant.

Nor should every condition be reduced to the loss of rewards. Some concern the integrity of the gospel, rescue from deception, and whether believers become the mature and faithful people God intends. Yet none of the passages examined here explicitly states that God's seed departs, holy spirit is withdrawn, reconciliation is reversed, or a born-again child suffers the second death.

The proper question is never merely whether a passage contains the word "if." The question is what the condition governs and what consequence Paul names. When those questions are answered from the context, his warnings retain their full seriousness without being made to contradict his declarations about new birth, reconciliation, and life in Christ. Faithfulness determines much about a believer's growth, service, usefulness, reward, and future responsibility. These conditional statements do not establish the appendix's further claim that a born-again child who fails to continue will suffer the second death.

Do the Warning Passages Teach the Loss of the New Birth?

Endurance, Apostasy, Judgment, and Destruction

Appendix 10 relies heavily upon passages that warn against hardness, unbelief, apostasy, deliberate sin, and retreat from faith. These texts contain some of the strongest language in the New Testament. They speak of failing to enter God's rest, falling away, facing fearful judgment, being destroyed, and suffering the second death. Their severity must not be softened merely because it is difficult to reconcile with permanent salvation.

The seriousness of a warning, however, does not by itself identify the precise consequence being threatened. Scripture describes divine discipline, physical death, ruined service, lost reward, and final judgment, and those outcomes must not be treated as interchangeable. Nor should every warning addressed to Christians be reduced to a matter of reward. The interpreter must identify the audience, the danger, and the consequence each passage actually names, then determine whether the text connects a born-again child with everlasting destruction.

Hebrews 3 and 4 provide one of Appendix 10's principal arguments. The letter addresses *"holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling"* and warns them against *"a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God"* (Hebrews 3:1, 12). The writer then declares, *"We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end"* (Hebrews 3:14). Appendix 10 understands these statements to mean that believers retain everlasting life only if they continue believing until death.

The historical example controlling the warning is Israel's failure in the wilderness. God delivered the nation from Egypt and led the people toward the land He had promised, but the rebellious generation refused to trust Him and died without entering Canaan. Appendix 10 properly distinguishes those hardened rebels from Moses and Aaron, who also failed to enter the land but were faithful servants of God. That qualification is important, because Hebrews focuses upon persistent unbelief rather than every act of disobedience.

Even with that distinction, the explicit historical consequence was death in the wilderness and exclusion from Canaan. Hebrews uses Canaan typologically, and the later Sabbath rest reaches beyond Joshua's conquest toward God's completed purpose. Yet a type does not define every feature of its fulfillment. The passage must still demonstrate that exclusion from the promised rest means the second death for someone who has been born of God.

The writer uses "*rest*" in a layered way. He refers to God's rest after creation, Israel's opportunity to enter the land, the rest Joshua did not finally provide, a rest entered through present faith, and a Sabbath rest that still remains. Thus he says both, "*We who have believed enter that rest,*" and, "*There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God*" (Hebrews 4:3, 9). The future dimension is genuine, but "*rest*" is not presented as a simple technical synonym for regeneration.

Hebrews 3:14 also contains a real condition. Holding firmly is necessary for continuing as faithful partners with Christ and for reaching the promised goal. The statement does not explain that partnership as the mechanism by which spiritual birth is kept alive, nor does it say that God removes eternal life when confidence is abandoned. It warns that hardened unbelief can exclude people from what God has called them to enter.

The warning therefore retains its force. The wilderness generation lost a promised inheritance through unbelief, and Hebrews urges professing believers to examine themselves, encourage one another, and persevere. The passage may look forward to the age to come, but it does not state that a child born of God will suffer the second death if he fails to enter that rest. That further connection is the point Appendix 10 must establish.

Hebrews 6 contains even more severe language:

“It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in holy spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the Word of God and the powers of the coming age and who have fallen away, to be brought back to repentance. To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace” (Hebrews 6:4–6).

These descriptions should not be reduced to casual exposure or superficial interest. The people have received light, tasted God’s gift and Word, shared in the activity of holy spirit, and encountered powers of the coming age. Even the word “*tasted*” need not imply a partial or unreal experience; Hebrews uses the same word when it says that Jesus tasted death (Hebrews 2:9).

Whether the people described were regenerate has long been debated, but the argument for permanent salvation need not depend upon denying it. Even if they were born-again believers, the consequence expressly named is the impossibility of renewing them to repentance while they are repudiating Christ. The participles translated “*crucifying*” and “*subjecting*” may indicate that restoration is impossible while that hostile posture continues, although that grammatical conclusion should not be treated as certain. In either case, the passage does not say that holy spirit is removed or that the person suffers the second death.

The immediate context begins with spiritual dullness and a failure to mature. The writer urges his readers to move beyond elementary instruction and warns where continued regression may lead. He then compares them to land that receives abundant rain: one field produces a useful crop and receives blessing, while another produces thorns, is in danger of being cursed, and is finally burned (Hebrews 6:7–8). The image emphasizes response, fruitfulness, and severe judgment; it does not define that judgment as the loss of regeneration.

The writer immediately adds, *“Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your case—the things that have to do with salvation”* (Hebrews 6:9). He distinguishes the threatened condition from better things accompanying salvation and expresses confidence in God’s remembrance of their work and love. His purpose is to rouse sluggish people to diligence, not to persuade repentant believers that one failure has placed them beyond mercy.

Hebrews 10 presents the strongest warning in the letter:

“If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.”
(Hebrews 10:26–27)

This is not a reference to every conscious sin a Christian commits. The following verses describe someone who tramples the Son of God underfoot, treats the blood of the covenant as profane, and insults the spirit of grace. The issue is settled repudiation of Christ after knowing the truth. Because his sacrifice is the only effective sacrifice, rejecting him leaves no alternative means of cleansing.

That warning must be read beside the declarations immediately preceding it. Believers *“have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus*

Christ once for all,” and *“by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy”* (Hebrews 10:10, 14). The sacrifice is unrepeatable, and its saving effect is described as completed and enduring. Verses 26–31 should not be interpreted in a way that silently overturns those statements without explaining how they fit together.

The people threatened with judgment are not easily dismissed as outsiders. One has been sanctified by the blood of the covenant, and the warning declares, *“The Lord will judge His people”* (Hebrews 10:29–30). Appendix 10 is therefore right to insist that the passage concerns people with genuine covenant standing and threatens far more than a minor setback. It is also right that the word translated “destruction” in verse 39, *apōleia*, can carry the force of final ruin. Lexical range alone cannot make the warning harmless.

Nevertheless, severe judgment of God’s people is not automatically identical to the second death. Some Corinthian believers became weak, sick, and even died under God’s judgment, yet Paul explained that they were disciplined *“so that we will not be finally condemned with the world”* (1 Corinthians 11:30–32). Elsewhere he describes a person whose work is burned and who suffers loss, although he himself is saved (1 Corinthians 3:15). These passages do not prove that Hebrews 10 concerns only discipline or reward, but they demonstrate why the nature of its judgment must be established rather than assumed.

The pastoral setting also matters. The readers had endured persecution, public insult, imprisonment, and confiscation of property because they knew they possessed *“better and lasting possessions”* (Hebrews 10:34). Under renewed pressure, they were tempted to abandon the confession they had once courageously maintained. The writer therefore tells them, *“Do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded”* (Hebrews 10:35).

Endurance concerns their faithful reception of what God promised, and retreat would bring real loss and fearful judgment.

The chapter concludes, *“But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved”* (Hebrews 10:39). The contrast is stark and should remain so. Yet the writer does not explain that the destruction consists of removing holy spirit, reversing the new birth, or casting one of God’s born-again children into the Lake of Fire. His statements about being perfected forever and possessing lasting realities constrain how the warning is understood, even if they do not make every detail easy.

Hebrews 10 therefore cannot be answered by saying that “destruction” merely means lost reward. It must be answered by holding together the finality of Christ’s sacrifice, the genuine standing of the people addressed, and the severity of divine judgment. The writer closes preventively and pastorally by identifying himself and his readers with those who believe rather than those who shrink back. The warning is one means by which he calls them away from apostasy; it does not expressly declare that a born-again child will suffer the second death.

Second Peter 2:20–22 is another major proof text:

“If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them” (2 Peter 2:20–21).

Appendix 10 reasons that these people escaped worldly corruption through knowing Christ, later returned to it, and became worse off. It concludes that they received salvation and then forfeited everlasting life. The description is

unquestionably strong. The term translated “*knowledge*” can refer to genuine Christian knowledge, and Peter has already said that these teachers deny “*the sovereign Lord who bought them*” (2 Peter 2:1). Those expressions deserve their full weight.

The chapter, however, identifies its subjects as destructive false teachers who secretly enter the community, exploit others, indulge corrupt desires, seduce unstable people, and promise freedom while remaining slaves of corruption. Jude’s parallel description speaks of ungodly people who “*have secretly slipped in among you*” and who “*do not have the spirit*” (Jude 4, 19). This context makes it possible that Peter is describing deeply privileged and morally reformed people who never received the new birth.

Peter’s closing proverbs point in the same direction: “*A dog returns to its vomit,*” and, “*A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud*” (2 Peter 2:22). The images do not prove by themselves that every false teacher was unregenerate, but they portray a return consistent with underlying nature. The sow had been washed and had genuinely escaped the mud, yet outward cleansing had not changed what it was.

Likewise, knowledge of Christ can restrain corruption, reform conduct, and introduce a person to the blessings of Christian community without necessarily establishing spiritual birth. Being “bought” may express the Master’s rightful claim and the redemptive provision these teachers denied; Peter does not say that they were sealed with holy spirit or created anew. The stronger those privileges were, the greater their accountability became.

Their final condition could therefore be worse without requiring the loss of salvation. They did not sin in ignorance; they learned the way of righteousness, represented it publicly, corrupted others through it, and then deliberately turned away. Second Peter 2 is fully compatible with unregenerate false teachers whose reform and knowledge were real, and it

does not clearly identify them as born-again children who later suffered the second death.

Appendix 10 also appeals to Jesus' promises in Revelation. To the persecuted congregation in Smyrna, he says, "*Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown,*" and, "*The one who is victorious will not be hurt at all by the second death*" (Revelation 2:10–11). These words have unmistakable salvation force because the promise concerns life and exemption from the second death.

The setting, however, is threatened imprisonment and martyrdom. Faithfulness "to the point of death" means loyalty even when loyalty costs one's physical life; it is not simply a formula requiring uninterrupted belief until natural death. Nor should the crown of life be reduced to a reward wholly separate from life. Life itself may be pictured as the victor's crown granted by Christ.

Even so, a promise to the victorious does not automatically establish its reverse. Jesus assures suffering believers that those who remain loyal cannot be conquered by the second death, even if persecutors kill them. He does not say in this passage that every born-again believer who falters under persecution will therefore suffer the second death.

First John helps explain the relation between birth and victory: "*Everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith*" (1 John 5:4). Overcoming proceeds from the life God gives; it is not presented as the achievement that keeps the new birth in existence. Revelation calls believers to express that victory through endurance, purity, and resistance to compromise, while its warnings and promises summon them to live consistently with what God has made them.

The warning passages therefore establish truths that permanent salvation must never obscure. People may receive extraordinary spiritual privilege

and still harden themselves against God. Professing Christians may abandon the truth, and genuine believers may become dull, compromised, fruitless, or publicly unfaithful. Apostasy increases guilt, harms others, and invites divine judgment; Scripture gives no permission to presume upon grace.

At the same time, the passages do not all describe the same people or threaten the same consequence. Hebrews 3–4 warns against forfeiting God’s rest through unbelief. Hebrews 6 warns of barrenness and a condition in which renewal to repentance becomes impossible. Hebrews 10 threatens fearful judgment and destruction for repudiating Christ’s only sacrifice. Second Peter 2 exposes false teachers whose greater knowledge produces greater accountability, and Revelation 2 promises life to believers facing martyrdom. Their differences should not be flattened into a single formula.

Nor should every text be forced into the narrower category of lost reward. Some language may include physical judgment, temporal ruin, loss, shame, or forfeited inheritance; other language may concern the final judgment of people whose Christian profession never reflected new birth. In several places, more than one interpretation remains possible. Doctrinal certainty should not be built by treating a disputed inference as though it were an explicit statement.

Appendix 10 acknowledges that a child of God would remain His child even if finally destroyed. The decisive question is therefore not whether apostasy makes someone “unborn,” but whether these warnings clearly say that a person born of God will suffer the second death. They do not make that connection explicit. Their severity should move every reader toward faith, obedience, and endurance, but it does not overturn the promises attached to God’s imperishable seed, His abiding gift of holy spirit, and the completed work of Christ.

Do the Seal and Guarantee Permit Cancellation?

The Seal, the Guarantee, and the Day of Redemption

Appendix 10 acknowledges that believers are marked with the seal of holy spirit and that holy spirit is called a down payment of their future inheritance. It correctly rejects the idea that sealing means holy spirit is physically locked inside a believer like an object in a container. It then argues that an ancient down payment could be forfeited and places Paul's language within a bilateral covenant: God will fulfill His part, but a believer who abandons Christ breaks the covenant and forfeits the promised inheritance.

That argument is more substantial than simply denying the force of the word "guarantee," but it still must be established from Paul's sentences. Neither "seal" nor "down payment" should be treated as an isolated word that settles the doctrine by itself. The questions are who performs the sealing, what God gives as the down payment, what the gift signifies, and the destination toward which He directs it.

Paul writes:

"In union with him you also, when you heard the message of truth—the good news of your salvation—and when you believed in him, you were marked with a seal—the promised holy spirit—which is the down payment of our inheritance, until our redemption as God's own possession, to the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:13–14 REV).

The sequence is clear. The Ephesians heard the good news and believed, and God responded by including them in Christ and marking them with the

promised holy spirit. Their continuing faith is not called the seal, and their future perseverance is not called the down payment. God gives the gift at the time of faith and directs it toward the redemption still to come.

A seal could indicate ownership, identification, authentication, or protection, so the image alone does not prove that a seal can never be broken. Its force in Ephesians comes from the surrounding description. Believers have been claimed as God's possession, marked with His gift, and promised redemption. The seal is not merely a record that they once belonged to Him; it identifies the people God intends to redeem as His own possession.

The Greek word *arrabōn* means a pledge, first installment, or down payment. Appendix 10 is correct that ordinary commercial transactions could fail and that a down payment did not make every ancient agreement incapable of cancellation. Yet the existence of failed transactions does not determine Paul's use of the image. A metaphor carries the point for which it is employed; it does not import every contingency that might occur in the marketplace.

The direction of the transaction is decisive. Holy spirit is not the believer's down payment to God, pledging that the believer will continue making payments through lifelong faith. It is God's gift to the believer and an advance portion of the inheritance still to come. The believer is not purchasing the inheritance from God, and God is not a fallible buyer who may default. The reliability of the pledge rests upon the One who gives it.

The commercial example offered by Appendix 10 illustrates the problem. When a buyer gives earnest money and later defaults, the buyer forfeits what he paid. In Ephesians, however, God gives the down payment to the believer. Importing the buyer's default into Paul's metaphor changes the roles, while treating the believer as a seller who must later deliver something

introduces a role Paul never assigns. The controlling point is not every way a business agreement might fail, but God's act of giving part of the promised future in advance.

In effect, Appendix 10 treats continued trust as an unstated installment the believer must keep paying. Christians unquestionably owe continuing loyalty to God and Christ, but the existence of covenant responsibilities does not make every divine gift revocable. Ephesians 1:13–14 contains no condition saying that the down payment remains effective only if the recipient continues believing. If the inheritance is ultimately guaranteed by the believer's future choice, holy spirit is no longer functioning as the assurance Paul identifies; the decisive guarantee has become human perseverance.

Paul uses the same language in 2 Corinthians, where the context emphasizes God's faithfulness. After declaring that God's promises are "Yes" in Christ, he writes:

"Now the One who is establishing us with you in union with Christ and has anointed us is God, who also marked us with a seal and put the spirit in our hearts as a down payment of what is to come" (2 Corinthians 1:21–22 REV).

God is the acting subject throughout the statement. He establishes believers in Christ, anoints them, marks them with His seal, and places His gift within them as the down payment. Paul does not divide the work by saying that God begins it while the believer's continued trust guarantees its completion. Christian confidence rests upon the faithfulness of the One performing each action.

Second Corinthians 5 connects the down payment directly with bodily redemption. Paul describes the present body as a temporary tent and looks forward to the time when mortality will be swallowed up by life. He then

explains, “*Now the One who prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the spirit as a down payment of what is to come.*”

(2 Corinthians 5:5 REV)

The words “*this very thing*” refer to the future transformation Paul has just described. God has prepared believers for immortal life and has given them holy spirit as its present pledge. Paul therefore continues, “*We are always confident*” (2 Corinthians 5:6). His confidence is not based upon knowing that neither he nor his readers will ever struggle; it arises from what God has prepared and already given.

The same chapter preserves accountability. Paul says that believers will appear before the judgment seat of Christ and be repaid for what they practiced in the body (2 Corinthians 5:10). The down payment therefore does not eliminate judgment or make conduct unimportant. It assures the believer’s future bodily life while leaving room for Christ’s evaluation of how that life was lived.

Romans 8 uses the related image of firstfruits. Believers possess “*the firstfruits of the spirit*” while eagerly awaiting “*the redemption of our bodies*” (Romans 8:23). Firstfruits are the beginning of the coming harvest, not an unrelated gift. The present spirit and future bodily redemption are two stages of one saving work, and what God gives now anticipates what He will complete when Christ returns.

Earlier in the chapter, Paul connects the indwelling spirit with that same future: “*He who raised Christ from among the dead will also bring your mortal bodies to life through His spirit that dwells in you*” (Romans 8:11 REV). The spirit’s presence is not merely evidence of a past decision. God identifies it as the means by which He will bring the believer’s mortal body to life.

Ephesians 4:30 makes the destination of the seal unmistakable:

“And do not grieve the holy spirit of God, which is the seal with which you were marked until the day of redemption” (Ephesians 4:30 REV).

The people capable of grieving holy spirit are the same people marked with it until the day of redemption. Paul is warning Christians against falsehood, uncontrolled anger, stealing, corrupt speech, bitterness, rage, slander, and malice. Their conduct is serious enough to resist God’s work within them, yet Paul does not say that these failures remove the gift or cancel the seal. He reminds them of the seal as the reason their behavior must change.

Appendix 10 may distinguish these sins from complete repudiation of Christ. That distinction is meaningful when evaluating the seriousness of conduct, but Ephesians does not turn it into a cancellation clause. Paul does not say that ordinary sin grieves holy spirit while apostasy removes it. The stated duration of the seal is until the day of redemption, not until the believer commits a particular degree of unbelief.

This does not make obedience optional. Paul’s reasoning is that believers should live in a manner worthy of the calling they have already received. Their identity grounds the command: because they belong to God and bear His seal, they must not live in ways that contradict His holiness. Conduct affects fellowship, spiritual growth, usefulness, testimony, reward, and the Father’s discipline, but none of those consequences changes the destination Paul assigns to the seal.

Appendix 10 concedes that Scripture does not explain whether someone who possessed holy spirit and later abandoned Christ would still have holy spirit when raised for judgment. That silence is not a minor detail. Holy spirit is the gift received in the new birth, the seal identifying God’s possession, the firstfruits of bodily redemption, and the down payment of the inheritance. A doctrine that says a born-again believer can suffer the

second death must explain what becomes of the gift God directed toward redemption.

The available possibilities create serious problems. If holy spirit is withdrawn, Scripture never describes that removal from a born-again member of Christ's Body. If it remains, God's seal and down payment remain within someone who allegedly will never receive the redemption they signify. If the gift remains but ceases to guarantee anything, the language of down payment has been emptied of its stated purpose. None of these outcomes appears in Paul's teaching.

This silence would not prove permanent salvation if the sealing passages stood alone. They do not. The same people are included in Christ, made God's possession, prepared for immortal life, and given the first portion of what is still to come. The seal, down payment, firstfruits, inheritance, and day of redemption form a unified progression from God's present act to His future completion.

Paul's language communicates more than a sincere but revocable offer. God has acted upon those who believed, placed His own gift within them, and identified that gift as the beginning and pledge of what He will yet accomplish. The future inheritance rests upon His faithfulness and ability, not upon the believer's ability to guarantee every future choice.

The seal therefore provides both assurance and a summons to holiness. Christians can grieve holy spirit, resist its influence, damage their fellowship with God, and squander opportunities for service and reward. They cannot make God's down payment cease to be the pledge He says it is. The day of redemption is not the day God discovers whether His seal survived; it is the day His marked possession receives the completed redemption toward which the seal has pointed from the moment of faith.

Accountability Is Not the Reversal of Regeneration

Discipline, Reward, Inheritance, and Rulership

Any defense of permanent salvation must preserve the full seriousness of Christian accountability. If security is used to make obedience optional, sin harmless, or biblical warnings empty, it has been badly misunderstood. God's grace does not shield believers from every consequence of rebellion, and the certainty of eternal life does not make the way they live eternally insignificant.

Appendix 10 itself recognizes an important distinction in 1 Corinthians 3. It explains that a believer's works may be burned, causing the loss of reward, while the believer remains saved. This agreement matters. The issue is not whether Scripture contains a category of accountability distinct from the second death, but how broadly that category should inform the interpretation of discipline, judgment, loss, inheritance, rulership, and shame.

Permanent salvation places secure sonship under serious accountability. God's children remain responsible for their conduct, and their choices affect fellowship, fruitfulness, usefulness, reward, honor, and future responsibility. They may also experience severe judgment in the present and real loss before Christ. These consequences should be allowed to carry their full weight without being treated as different names for final destruction.

Hebrews 12 presents divine discipline as an expression of sonship:

"The Lord disciplines the one He loves, and He chastens everyone He accepts as His son.... God is treating you as His children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?" (Hebrews 12:6–7).

Discipline may be painful because God's holiness and the believer's conduct genuinely matter. He corrects His children to expose sin, interrupt destructive patterns, and produce "*a harvest of righteousness and peace*" (Hebrews 12:11). Hebrews 12 does not by itself settle every question about final destiny, but it establishes that serious divine correction can occur within sonship. God deals with disobedient believers as children who require training, not merely as enemies awaiting destruction.

The Corinthian congregation shows how severe such correction may become. Some believers were humiliating poorer members of Christ's Body and abusing the Lord's Supper. Paul said that some among them were weak and sick and that others had died. He then explained, "*When we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world*" (1 Corinthians 11:32).

The distinction is explicit. The Corinthians experienced judgment from the Lord, and that judgment included physical death, yet its purpose was that they would not be condemned with the world. Their secure standing did not make their conduct harmless; it placed them under God's severe correction. This passage demonstrates that judgment, suffering, and death do not automatically mean the loss of everlasting life.

Accountability also extends to the believer's future appearance before Christ:

"For we must all appear and be exposed before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be repaid for the things done in the body, according to what he has made a practice of doing, whether good or evil."

(2 Corinthians 5:10 REV)

The judgment seat is not merely an awards ceremony where every believer receives the same commendation. Christ will expose motives, evaluate conduct, reward what was faithful, and repay what was evil. Salvation by

grace does not remove this accounting. It distinguishes the question of whether a believer possesses everlasting life from the question of how faithfully that life was lived and what consequences that conduct deserves.

Paul's clearest explanation appears in 1 Corinthians 3. He compares Christian service to building upon the foundation of Jesus Christ. Fire will reveal the quality of each person's work, and then Paul states, "*If anyone's work that he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss, but he himself will be saved, but it will be like escaping through a fire*" (1 Corinthians 3:14–15 REV).

The work and the worker receive different outcomes. The work may be consumed and the reward lost while the worker remains saved. Appendix 10 correctly observes that this passage concerns a believer's work rather than a person who has repudiated Christ. It therefore does not directly answer every passage about apostasy. Nevertheless, it establishes a category that must remain available elsewhere: fire, loss, and a devastatingly poor evaluation can occur without the second death.

This is no trivial outcome. A believer may stand before Christ and discover that years of activity produced little of enduring value. Paul says that the Lord "*will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart*" (1 Corinthians 4:5). Work arising from love, truth, humility, and obedience will survive, while service corrupted by pride, rivalry, manipulation, or self-promotion may be exposed and lost.

Paul therefore treated his ministry with disciplined seriousness. Comparing Christian service to an athletic contest, he wrote, "*I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize*" (1 Corinthians 9:27). His stated concern is disqualification from the prize. A minister may preach to others yet become

unapproved through moral failure, neglected discipline, or misuse of what God entrusted to him.

The distinction between gift and reward is essential. Scripture calls everlasting life God's gift: "*The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Romans 6:23). Reward, by contrast, recognizes faithful labor, sacrifice, endurance, and stewardship. Treating every promised reward as another name for salvation makes the gift dependent upon performance and leaves inadequate room for Christ's differentiated evaluation of believers.

Crown imagery must still be handled according to context. Paul's "*crown of righteousness*" follows a race faithfully completed, and Peter's "*crown of glory*" is promised to shepherds who care faithfully for God's people (2 Timothy 4:7–8; 1 Peter 5:2–4). Other expressions, such as "the crown of life," may portray life itself as the victor's crown and should not automatically be reduced to a reward separate from salvation. The presence of a crown does not settle the question; the surrounding passage must identify what is promised.

Inheritance language also has more than one emphasis. It may refer broadly to the future life and Kingdom received by God's people, or it may emphasize a particular share, privilege, honor, or responsibility connected with faithfulness. Therefore, neither side should assume that every reference to inheritance means either basic salvation or additional reward. Context must determine what aspect of the believer's future is in view.

Romans 8 illustrates the need for care: "*If we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ—if in fact we suffer with him so that we will also be glorified with him*" (Romans 8:17 REV). Sonship and heirship arise from being God's children, while suffering with Christ is explicitly connected with sharing in his glory. The condition should not be weakened,

but the verse does not say that a child who avoids suffering ceases to be born of God or will suffer the second death.

Second Timothy 2 makes the connection with rulership even more direct: *“If we endure, we will also reign with him”* (2 Timothy 2:12). Endurance is the stated condition for reigning. The preceding line promises, *“If we died with him, we will also live with him”* (2 Timothy 2:11). Life rests upon identification with Christ in his death, while reigning is connected with faithful endurance. A believer may therefore possess life yet forfeit an opportunity to share fully in Christ’s rule.

Future shame provides another serious category. John writes, *“Remain in him, so that when he appears, we will have confidence and not shrink back in shame from him at his coming”* (1 John 2:28 REV). The alternatives named are confidence and shame before Christ. To face him with the knowledge of neglected truth, wasted opportunity, or persistent selfishness would be painful, but shame in his presence is not the same consequence as destruction in the Lake of Fire.

Believers are also accountable in their present fellowship with God. John writes so that Christians will not sin, but he immediately assures them that if anyone does sin, *“we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the righteous one”* (1 John 2:1). Sin disrupts fellowship and requires confession, forgiveness, and cleansing, but the advocate remains available because the underlying relationship has not disappeared.

Thus John promises, *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:9 REV). Confession is not another new birth. It is the honest return of a believer to fellowship with the Father. Advocacy and cleansing show that sin is consequential while also showing that failure does not require God to recreate the believer each time he repents.

Appendix 10 is right to reject any attempt to place every warning under the heading of lost reward. Some passages concern discipline, physical judgment, punishment, shame, damaged fellowship, or people whose profession never reflected regeneration. Other passages use language whose precise consequence is debated. Accountability is broader than reward, but that breadth is exactly why every severe warning should not be treated as a threat of the second death.

Paul confronted the fear that security would encourage rebellion when he asked, “*Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?*” His answer was emphatic: “*By no means!*” (Romans 6:1–2). He did not protect grace from abuse by making the new birth temporary. He appealed to the believer’s union with Christ and commanded those who had died to sin to present themselves to God as people brought from death to life.

Grace therefore supplies both the identity and the power from which obedience grows. Believers do not pursue holiness to keep God from undoing His work; they pursue holiness because they belong to Him, represent His Son, and will answer for how they used the life and opportunities He gave them. Assurance removes the fear of final condemnation, not the fear of grieving God, harming others, wasting one’s calling, or standing ashamed before Christ.

Accountability is therefore not evidence against permanent salvation. It demonstrates why permanent salvation never becomes permission to sin. God’s children remain under their Father’s discipline and must answer to their Lord. Everlasting life is secure, but fellowship, usefulness, reward, honor, and rulership are profoundly affected by how that life is lived.

Conclusion

What Appendix 10 Establishes and What It Does Not

REV Appendix 10, “God’s Promise of Salvation,” deserves a careful response because it addresses matters Scripture treats with great seriousness. It seeks to uphold genuine trust in Christ, the necessity of endurance, the danger of apostasy, and the continuing responsibility of believers. Any defense of permanent salvation that dismisses those concerns would be incomplete.

The appendix rightly teaches that salvation cannot be earned, that Jesus Christ’s sacrificial death provides its basis, and that God offers everlasting life by grace. It also rightly insists that Christians retain freedom of will, may fall into grave sin or doctrinal error, and must answer for how they live. The fullness of salvation, including resurrection and an immortal body, still lies ahead, and the warnings of Scripture must never be reduced to empty threats.

Its central claim is more precise than the assertion that every serious sin causes salvation to be lost. Appendix 10 distinguishes ordinary failure from a settled rejection of Christ. It also agrees that a child of God remains a child of God, even while arguing that such a child may forfeit salvation and ultimately be destroyed in the Lake of Fire. The question, therefore, is not whether the birth itself disappears, but whether someone who remains born of God may nevertheless lose the everlasting life God gave and suffer the second death.

That conclusion requires more than proving that trust, endurance, obedience, and warnings matter. It requires Scripture to identify final destruction as the consequence for a genuinely regenerated believer who

later repudiates Christ. It must also account for the new life, holy spirit, union with Christ, and divine seal already given to that person. This is where Appendix 10 reaches beyond what its cited passages establish.

The appendix's "logic of continuity" contains important truth. God has always been gracious, no one has ever earned everlasting life, and trust in what God has revealed has always mattered. Yet continuity in God's character and the necessity of trust do not make every biblical administration identical. Christ's resurrection, the new birth, the outpouring of holy spirit, and the creation of the Body of Christ introduced realities that did not exist under the Mosaic covenant. Passages describing Israel's covenant accountability cannot, by themselves, determine the permanence of what God later created through His risen Son.

The same care is required when Scripture speaks of salvation as both present and future. Christians still await bodily transformation, deliverance from the wrath to come, and the full manifestation of life in the coming age. Yet Jesus described the believer's present standing plainly: *"Whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life"* (John 5:24). The body remains mortal, but the believer has life and has crossed from death to life.

John later writes, *"God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. Whoever has the Son has life"* (1 John 5:11–12). He explains that he wrote to those who believe *"so that you may know that you have eternal life"* (1 John 5:13). Future completion does not make this present possession merely provisional. God has already given life, while resurrection will reveal that life in its final bodily fullness.

Conditional statements must likewise be interpreted according to the consequence each passage names. Holding firmly to the resurrection gospel protects its saving message from being emptied of its historical foundation.

Continuing in the faith advances believers toward maturity and a faithful presentation before Christ. Remaining in sound teaching protects ministers and hearers from deception. Enduring with Christ is connected with reigning with him. Continuing in God's kindness preserves participation in covenant privilege. These are genuine conditions, but the presence of the word "if" does not automatically place the new birth or eternal life at risk.

The warning passages are equally serious. Hebrews warns against hardness, immaturity, retreat, and deliberate repudiation. Jesus warns against shallow response, fruitlessness, deception, and failure to endure. Peter and Jude expose corrupt teachers who entered Christian communities, exploited others, and opposed the truth. Revelation calls believers to remain faithful through pressure, suffering, and compromise. These warnings must be heard with their full force, but their severity does not permit the interpreter to assume the second death whenever the text speaks of destruction, fire, loss, denial, or shame.

Scripture provides many categories of accountability besides final destruction. God disciplines His children, sometimes with extraordinary severity. Christ will expose motives, judge conduct, reward faithful service, and bring loss upon what was worthless or evil. Believers may suffer damaged fellowship, diminished usefulness, shame before Christ, lost reward, forfeited honor, and lost opportunities to reign. Appendix 10 itself acknowledges in 1 Corinthians 3 that a believer's work may be burned and his reward lost while he remains saved. That distinction must remain available wherever the context identifies a consequence other than the second death.

Freedom of will does not settle the question. A person freely believes the gospel, but faith does not perform the saving acts that follow. God gives the new birth, makes the believer alive with Christ, justifies, reconciles, gives holy spirit, and spiritually incorporates the believer into Christ's Body.

Human faith receives; God creates. A believer remains capable of resisting God, grieving holy spirit, denying truth, and living contrary to his new identity, but freedom does not establish that he can determine the nature or duration of what God created.

Appendix 10's admission that a child of God remains a child narrows the disagreement considerably. Sonship alone may not answer every question about destiny, but it cannot be dismissed as an insignificant title. Christian sonship arises from God's act of begetting through the word of truth and is accompanied by His abiding seed. The fate of rebellious angels, who are also called sons of God, does not establish the fate of people born through faith in the risen Christ. Scripture never says that angels received the Christian new birth, the promised gift of holy spirit, or membership in Christ's Body.

The seal and down payment bring the issue into still sharper focus. Paul says that when people heard and believed the gospel, God marked them with the promised holy spirit as the down payment of their inheritance. God is the giver, and holy spirit is His present pledge of the redemption to come. An ancient commercial transaction could fail, but importing every possible marketplace failure into Paul's image changes its purpose. The believer is not making installment payments to God, and continued faith is not identified as the down payment. God gives the first portion and directs it toward the day of redemption.

Appendix 10 acknowledges that Scripture does not explain whether someone who possessed holy spirit and later abandoned Christ would still possess it when raised for judgment. That silence does not prove permanent salvation by itself, but it exposes a serious gap. If the gift is removed, Scripture never describes that removal from a born-again member of Christ's Body. If it remains, the seal and down payment remain in someone who supposedly will never receive the redemption they signify. The

appendix's conclusion depends upon a failure of the promised outcome that Paul never places within the sealing passages.

No single word or metaphor carries the whole case for permanent salvation. The force lies in the convergence of God's actions and promises. He gives eternal life, begets His children, makes them alive with Christ, places His seed within them, justifies and reconciles them, seals them with holy spirit, and identifies that gift as the first portion of what is still to come. The warning passages must be interpreted within this larger biblical reality rather than being used to overturn it by inference.

The pastoral difference is significant. Appendix 10 intends to encourage vigilance, but its position leaves final assurance dependent upon an unknown future choice. A believer may know that he trusts Christ today, but he cannot know whether fear, deception, suffering, illness, or future weakness will eventually overcome that trust. The issue is not whether believers should continue trusting Christ; they should. It is whether assurance rests on the durability of their faith or on what God accomplished through Christ and the eternal life He says He has given.

Such assurance does not make holiness optional. Paul answered that objection directly when he rejected the idea that Christians should continue in sin so that grace might increase (Romans 6:1–2). He grounded obedience in union with Christ and called believers to live consistently with the life they had received. Christians do not obey in order to prevent God from undoing His work; they obey because they belong to Him, represent His Son, and will answer to Christ for how they used what God entrusted to them.

Appendix 10 therefore establishes much that should be retained. Faith must be genuine. Christians should continue trusting Christ, resist deception, endure hardship, and take apostasy seriously. Sin hardens and destroys.

Doctrine matters. God disciplines His children, and Christ will judge their service. Grace must never be turned into an excuse for rebellion.

What Appendix 10 does not establish is its decisive proposition: that someone who remains born of God and possesses the life God gave can nevertheless lose salvation and suffer the second death. It does not show that God's abiding seed departs, that holy spirit is withdrawn, that His seal ceases to identify His possession, or that the down payment fails to reach the redemption toward which God directed it.

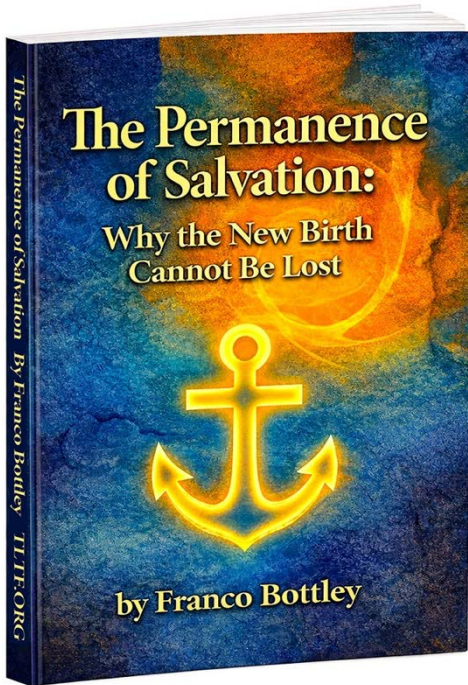
This is not a minor omission. A doctrine of forfeiture must explain not only the human act of apostasy but the corresponding divine reversal that forfeiture would require. If someone who has truly been born of God later loses salvation, what does Scripture say happens to the life God gave? Appendix 10 explains how a believer may cease to trust; it does not identify the act of God by which the spiritual realities He created are undone. Those reversals are inferred from disputed warnings and conditional statements, not stated in the passages describing the new birth, holy spirit, the seal, or the down payment.

Scripture clearly warns that apostasy can occur. What Appendix 10 does not establish is that apostasy terminates the everlasting life God has already given to the person born of Him.

Salvation is permanent because its decisive acts belong to God. Faith receives His gift, but faith does not create or sustain the life He gives. The believer's choices remain profoundly important because they affect fellowship, growth, discipline, reward, and rulership. Scripture therefore permits both confidence and holy seriousness: confidence because eternal life rests upon God's completed work, and holy seriousness because every believer will answer to Christ. The new birth cannot be lost, and the life that follows it must never be wasted.

For Further Study

The Permanence of Salvation



This booklet has focused specifically on the claims made in REV Appendix 10, “God’s Promise of Salvation.” Readers seeking a more comprehensive biblical study are encouraged to read *The Permanence of Salvation: Why the New Birth Cannot Be Lost* by Franco Bottley.

The book develops the biblical case for permanent salvation by examining eternal life, the new birth, justification, reconciliation, the gift of holy spirit, membership in Christ’s Body, God’s seal and

down payment, divine discipline, the judgment seat of Christ, and the distinction between salvation and reward. It also considers many passages commonly used to argue that salvation can be lost. Rather than responding to one appendix, it presents an integrated account of why assurance rests upon God’s completed work without minimizing sin, endurance, obedience, or Christian accountability.

The Permanence of Salvation is available in paperback and Kindle editions through Amazon and digitally through Apple Books. Direct purchase links are available at <https://thelivingtruthfellowship.org/books/>.

About The Living Truth Fellowship

The Living Truth Fellowship is an international Bible-teaching ministry and community of believers committed to magnifying the Lord Jesus Christ through clear and accurate teaching of Scripture. We help people know the one true God, our Heavenly Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ; develop a personal and vital relationship with God and Christ; and live God's truth with conviction and purpose.

We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God—coherent, trustworthy, and best understood from its own words and context rather than through religious tradition. Through free articles, books, booklets, video and audio teachings, seminars, and online fellowships, we equip believers to study Scripture for themselves, form sound convictions, grow strong in Christ, and serve faithfully within his Body.

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