

What Must I Do to Be *Unsaved*?

The question “What must I do to be saved?” is easily answered from Acts 16:31: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.” While arguments abound for that salvation to be secure forever (see *GraceNotes* no. 24, “Eternally Secure”), some don’t agree; they believe that salvation can be lost. Considering all that transpires in one’s salvation, if it were possible to forfeit that salvation, here’s what someone should be told to do.

- 1. Deny the extent of the atonement.** When Jesus Christ died on the cross, He said “It is finished!” He meant that He had made the full payment to satisfy God’s just requirements for the penalty of all the sins of all people. God is now propitiated or appeased. You would have to conclude that Christ’s work did not satisfy God’s justice and it is not sufficient for you. (John 19:30; Rom. 3:25; 1 John 2:2)
- 2. Reverse God’s justification.** It would be like throwing out the verdict of the Judge of the whole universe who judges based on His Son’s righteous sacrifice, not one’s behavior. Instead of His verdict declaring you righteous, you would have to obtain a judgment declaring you guilty despite Christ’s payment. (Rom. 3:24; 8:31-34; Gal. 2:16)
- 3. Refund redemption.** Since believers are bought out of the slave market of sin through the price God paid by giving His Son, you would need to refund that payment or discredit it. (Rom. 3:24; Gal. 3:13; 4:5; 1 Peter 1:18-19)
- 4. Revoke reconciliation.** Jesus Christ reconciled and restored harmony to man’s relationship to God by removing the barrier of sin and thus any cause for hostility. You would need to undo His repair work and become an enemy of God again. (2 Cor. 5:18-19; Col. 1:19-22)
- 5. Annul adoption.** When God adopts believers into His royal family, they are treated with all the rights of natural sons and daughters. In the ancient world as today, adoption was and is a legal process, so you would have to seek a legal annulment and become like a slave again. (Rom. 8:15-17; Gal. 4:4-6)
- 6. Reject the pardon of forgiveness for sins.** God through Christ forgave all the sins of all who believe in His Son for eternal salvation. You must refuse to be pardoned and be willing to pay an eternal price for your sins. (Eph. 1:7; 4:32; Col. 1:14; 2:13-14)
- 7. Become unborn.** God brings all believers in Christ into His family by a new birth. You would need to un-birth or abort yourself from God’s regeneration and figure out how to be “born again” again (and again) should you decide to be saved again (and again). (John 1:12-13; 3:3-6; Titus 3:5)
- 8. Break the Holy Spirit’s seal.** Those who believe in Christ are sealed with the Holy Spirit until the day of their full and final redemption. In the ancient world, a seal guaranteed delivery to the final goal. You would have to break that seal and cancel the guarantee. (Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30; 2 Cor. 12:21-22)
- 9. Cast out the indwelling Holy Spirit.** Since all believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, you would have to cast Him out. (John 7:39; 14:16-17; Rom. 8:9-11)
- 10. Dislodge from union with Christ.** At salvation, believers are united with Christ in His death and resurrection. You would have to eject yourself from your spiritual position in Christ. (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:11-12)
- 11. Withdraw from the body of Christ.** Every believer is baptized (immersed) by the Holy Spirit into Christ’s body where each fulfills God’s purpose. You must undo the Holy Spirit’s baptizing work and God’s purpose for your spiritual gift in the body of Christ. (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 27-30)

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12. **Be unsanctified.** God looks at all those who believe in Jesus Christ as sanctified (set apart) positionally, and He works in them experientially. You would have to lose that special position and the experience of becoming like Christ. (1 Cor. 6:11; Heb. 10:10; 1 Thess. 5:23)

13. **Alter God's grace.** God's Word presents His grace as unlimited, unconditional, and exceeding all sin. You must change the meaning of this amazing grace to make it limited and conditional, as contradictory as that is. (Rom. 3:24; 5:20; 11:6; Eph. 1:6; 2:4-9)

14. **Limit God's love.** God's love is unfathomable and unconditional. His love moved Him to provide salvation by giving His Son, Jesus, and keep all who are saved securely in a relationship with Him. You would have to limit, separate from, or eliminate God's unmeasurable love. (John 3:16; Rom. 8:35-39; Eph. 2:4-5)

15. **Override God's ultimate purpose.** God's predestining purpose for those who believe is to conform them into Christlikeness and be finally glorified. You would have to override God's will and abandon that transformation. (Rom. 8:29-30; 2 Cor. 3:18)

16. **Loosen the divine double grip.** Those who believe in Christ are held securely in Jesus' hand and in God's hand. This means they have eternal life, will never perish, and cannot be snatched out of those hands. You would have to break loose from that strong grip. (John 6:37; 10:28-30)

17. **Make God a liar.** To all who believe in Christ, God promises eternal life which is secure and uninterrupted. You would have to assume God and His Son are liars. (John 3:15-16; 5:24; 6:37; Titus 1:2)

18. **Renounce heavenly citizenship.** Those who believe in Christ become citizens of heaven and are seated spiritually with Christ in heaven. To become unsaved, you must renounce this position. (Eph. 1:3; Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:1-3)

19. **Forfeit inheritance.** Believers are heirs of God with privileges of a richer inheritance according to their faithfulness. You would have to dispossess yourself of any inheritance God has for His children in His coming kingdom. (Acts 26:18; Rom. 8:17; Eph. 1:11)

20. **Return to death and darkness.** Those who believe in Christ are transferred out of the domain of death and darkness. You would have to be transferred out of life to return to death, and out of light back into darkness. (John 5:24; 11:25-26; Col. 1:12-13)

21. **Revoke the Old Testament covenants.** The promised salvation through the Messiah comes to believers through the unconditional covenants God made with Abraham, David, and Israel. Though He never rescinded His covenants, you must find a way to cancel the promise. (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:13-16; Gal. 3:29)

22. **Redact the Book of Life.** The names of all who believe in Christ and receive eternal life are written in the Book of Life. You would have to erase your name from that Book despite the assurance that God will never remove a believer's name from the Book. (Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5; 20:12-15)

Conclusion

When we understand all that was accomplished for and in all who are saved, it almost seems too hard to be unsaved, if that were possible. It is much easier to accept God's grace through faith and enjoy His blessings. It is difficult to understand how those who have the blessings of salvation would want to forfeit or lose them unless they do not understand or appreciate their possession. On the contrary, those blessings should motivate all believers to live a life pleasing to God.