

No One Can Snatch Me Out

Robert R. Roxas

Many people believe that, once a man becomes a Christian, he is saved forever. They contend that it is a Biblical truth. Do you believe in this also? If you believe in this, will you believe me if I tell you otherwise? What do you think is their basis for this important claim? If you ask those who embrace this doctrine, they will surely let you read John 10:28. This is the verse that supports their claim. It reads as follows: “*And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.*” (NKJV)

Yes, it is there in the Bible, but does the verse really refer to you? Does anybody have the right to claim this passage of Scripture? How can we know who are the ones that can not be snatched out of the Lord’s hand? Are all the people who claim to follow the Bible secure in the hands of the Lord?

Let us study carefully the passage to see who are these people that our Lord Jesus Christ mentioned in the verse. In John 10:28, there is no named recipient but just personal pronouns. It uses the third person plural pronoun either in the nominative case, i.e., *they* or in the objective case, i.e., *them*. He must be referring to an antecedent mentioned in the previous verse. To understand the antecedent that Christ was referring to, let us go back to the previous verse. John 10:27 states, “*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.*” Here we can read the noun *sheep* as the subject of the sentence, and the third person plural pronouns, *they* and *them*, refer to the subject *sheep*. Therefore, the words *they* and *them* in verse 28 refer to the *sheep* mentioned in verse 27.

Studying carefully the two verses, we can easily tell who has the right to claim the verse. We can now eliminate those who have no right to claim the passage. Only those sheep mentioned in verse 27 are the ones that shall not be snatched out from the Lord’s hand. Nobody would deny that the sheep mentioned by Christ could refer to the religious people in this world. These sheep, however, are not just any sheep. They have some characteristics or distinguishing marks. According to our Lord Jesus Christ, “*They hear My voice, I know them, and they follow Me.*” Thus, there are three marks that distinguish these sheep from the other sheep.

The first mark is that they are the ‘*listening sheep*.’ The New International Version of the Bible uses the term ‘*listen*’ instead of the term ‘*hear*.’ This means that this kind of sheep *heeds* what the Lord says. It obeys what the Lord says. If he does not obey what the Lord says, he does not hear or listen to the voice of the Lord. Let us put to the test these people who apply the passage for themselves. If they pass, then they have the right to claim the verse, and they shall not be snatched out from the Lord’s hand. But if they fail, then they are fooling themselves into believing in something that is not true.

Many people who claim the passage do not quote Mark 16:15-16 in their teachings. It is because they believe that anyone who believes in Christ is saved, even if that person is not yet baptized. The questions are “*who says this verse*” and “*what does it say*.” No one would deny that it was Christ who said the verse. In other words, it is the voice of the Lord. If they will not obey the voice of the Lord, then they do not *listen* to His voice. Therefore, they are not the sheep mentioned by Christ, and they have no right to claim the passage. In Mark

16:15-16, our Lord Jesus Christ says, *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. **He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned.**”* The voice of the Lord is very clear. It is not just merely believing in the gospel that saves a man. He needs baptism as well. In fact, if we study the Bible carefully, it is only after baptism that a person is saved (Acts 22:16). A good example is the conversion that happened on the day of Pentecost. After having delivered the first sermon on Pentecost, Peter was asked by the believing audience, who believed in the gospel that he preached. After listening to the message, they were *“cut to the heart”* (Acts 2:37a) and asked, *“Men and brethren, what shall we do?”* (Acts 2:37b). Peter replied, *“Repent and let each one of you **be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**”* (Acts 2:38). Clearly, Peter listened to what the Lord commanded them before He left to heaven.

The second mark is that they are *‘known by the Lord’*. Someone might say, “I can say that the Lord knows me because He knows everything. Besides, I call Him daily, I’m spreading the gospel in His name, I have cast out demons in His name, or I have performed miracles in His name. Therefore, the Lord knows me.” Matthew 7:21-23, however, clearly refutes this idea. Our very Lord Jesus Christ says, *“**Not everyone** who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but **he who does the will of My Father in heaven.** **Many** will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, **have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done wonders in Your name?**’ And then I will declare to them, ‘**I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!**”* So, can anyone claim to be known by God who uses the Scripture selectively, who will not do the will of the Father by obeying what Jesus commanded? If not, then he has no right to claim the passage in John 10:28.

The third mark is that *‘they follow Christ.’* They are Christ’s followers or Christians. In the Bible, only the disciples of Christ are called Christians (Acts 11:26). Who are the disciples of Christ, and how can they be distinguished from other people? The Bible gives us the clear answer to the above questions. In John 8:31, our Lord Jesus Christ says, *“**If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.**”*(NKJV) It is very clear that the real disciples, i.e., real Christians, **are the ones who remain or abide in the teaching of Christ.** If they do not teach the teaching of Christ fully, then they do not remain in the teaching of Christ, and they are not followers of Christ. They do not even have God in this world. The apostle John tells us clearly about this. He says, *“**Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.**”* (2 John 9). If they do not have God, how can they be in the hands of the Lord? If they are not in the hands of the Lord, then there is no way to claim that they will not be snatched out from the Lord’s hand.

Dear reader, please consider this matter very carefully. Do not follow any teaching that is not found in the Bible. Do not follow those people who are teaching Biblical truth but are selective in what they believe. They just select those verses that support their own belief but hiding or suppressing some verses from the knowledge of the people. The Lord is against such kind of people (Romans 1:18).

Is it true that once a person is truly saved, he can not lose his salvation? Let the Lord Jesus Christ tell us about this. In John 15:6, the Lord says, *“**If anyone does not remain in Me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.**”* It is very clear that not all who are in Christ are eternally secure.

There is a condition that has to be met, i.e., **if he remains in Christ**. If he does not remain in Christ, then he will be thrown into the fire. Even the apostle Paul believes in the **possibility of disqualification**. According to him, *“But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should **become disqualified**.”* (1 Corinthians 9:27) In another instance, Paul says, *“Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who **fell**, **severity**; but toward you, goodness, **if you continue** in His goodness. Otherwise you **will also be cut off**.”* (Romans 11:22). Think about the words ‘**continue**’ and ‘**cut off**’.

Does Jesus contradict Biblical truth? No. What He is saying is correct. Even in the Old Testament times, the Lord provided six cities of refuge for any manslayer, who accidentally killed a person, to seek refuge or get protection so that he would not be killed by the avenger of blood. Once the manslayer is inside the city of refuge, he is safe there, but when he gets out of it, then he is in a dangerous situation. The manslayer must remain in the city of refuge where he fled to until the high priest dies (Numbers 35:25-28). There exists a parallelism here. We know that we need to seek refuge in Christ to be saved. We also know that Christ is our High Priest and He dies no more.

Therefore, **if we remain** in Christ, we are **safe**; but if we **do not remain** in Christ, we are **no longer safe**. We must remain in Him to be saved. Always remember that remaining in Christ means remaining in His teachings **without adding or subtracting** His words. We can only get out of Him without endangering our salvation if He dies, but He dies no more. Thus, it is necessary that we remain in Him so that nobody can snatch us out from the Lord’s hand.

For further inquiries, please send your e-mail to: robert.roxas@tisachurchofchrist.org