

Eternal Security of the Believer

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“Lift up your eyes to the sky, then look to the earth beneath;
for the sky will vanish like smoke, and the earth will wear out like a
garment ... but My salvation will be forever.”

(Isaiah 51:6)

“I know that everything God does [including one’s salvation] will remain
forever; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it,
for God has so worked that men should fear him.”

(Ecclesiastes 3:14)



Open Invitation

When the Lord Jesus Christ was on the cross, He had you in mind. There was never a sin committed that was not poured out on Jesus Christ on the cross (1 Peter 2:24).

He endured all afflictions so that He might pave a way for you to have life more abundantly through Him. Regardless of how sinful you have been in the past, or are now, you can be forgiven and your slate wiped clean by God. How? By telling God right now that you are believing in His Son, Jesus Christ. The moment you put your entire trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will automatically become born into the family of God forever. The Bible says:

But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name (John 20:31).

Believe in the Lord Jesus, [Christ] and you will be saved (Acts 16:31).

Will you believe in Him today? Or will you reject Him? The decision is totally up to you.

For The Believer In Christ

All matters of spiritual value have been designed by God to be understood through the teaching ministry of God the Holy Spirit:

Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart [mind] of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him. For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God (1 Corinthians 2:9-12).

The only thing that prevents the Holy Spirit from teaching us is our personal sin(s). King David of the Old Testament clearly put it this way:

If I regard wickedness [sin] in my heart, the Lord will not hear (Psalm 66:18).

Therefore, if the Lord cannot hear a believer's prayer due to unconfessed sin in his soul, it follows logically that the Holy Spirit will not teach the individual.

Preface

Buy truth [sound Bible teaching], and do NOT sell it [hold on to it tightly] (Proverbs 23:23).

This is solemn advice from God the Father. Based on this advice, the following statements will be demonstrated in this teaching:

- A believer in the Lord Jesus Christ CANNOT be saved more than once.
- God's work, from the beginning to the end, is perfect.
- Once a person is saved he CANNOT lose his salvation.

Many Christians have argued against the doctrine of the eternal security of the believer. Whatever your position is on this doctrine, I urge you to be objective. A true student (disciple) of the Word of God always remains open to the ministry of God the Holy Spirit, who is the greatest teacher of all time. He is the only one capable of illuminating your mind with the truth of the infallible Word of God; therefore, as you objectively read this teaching, I pray that God the Father may enlighten your thinking through the ministry of the Holy Spirit:

Heavenly Father, I pray for those who are still unclear about your eternal plan. I pray for those who continue to remain in bondage because of lack of sound Bible teaching. I pray for the individual who lives his life in constant fear of losing his salvation. Father, I pray that Your Holy Spirit will make this teaching very clear to the readers. My eternal Father, thank You for answering my prayer, in the name of the One who loves us and gave His life for us on the cross, my great King, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Salvation: The Water Analogy

Jesus answered and said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water [natural water] will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him

[salvation by faith in Christ] shall NEVER THIRST; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life (John 4:13-14).

There is a sharp contrast in the two verses above. The contrast is between natural water and the spiritual water from Christ Jesus. Verse 13 speaks of a basic human need. Water is necessary to sustain human life. If a person deprives himself of water, he can easily become dehydrated. If the situation remains unchecked, he will eventually die. Jesus uses a known concept to explain an unknown concept: Natural water and spiritual water. He explains that when man receives the spiritual water that He offers, man's spiritual thirst will be quenched once and for all. When Jesus uses the words 'spiritual water,' He is referring to the simple gospel of salvation. One can conclude that salvation can only be obtained once and for all! (Hebrews 10:10).

Consider the following illustration: A man is standing with a cup in each hand. In the left hand, he holds a cup that he will always carry with him. This cup is used for his daily need for natural drinking water. In his other hand, he holds a special cup. It holds spiritual water. He has the choice to drink from it or to ignore it. If he does drink from it, he will do so only once because his thirst for spiritual water will be quenched. This is an illustration of what it means to receive the gift of salvation. It is important to note that it is necessary for this man to drink from this cup only once to receive the gift of salvation; therefore, the one who believes he must continually drink from this cup for salvation does not understand the concept of eternal security. In the following pages, the issue of eternal security of the believer will be discussed.

Salvation: A Grace Issue

For by GRACE you have been saved [Greek: saved in the past, in the present, and forever] through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the GIFT of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Many believers have memorized these verses but do not understand how to apply them to their lives. The truth is that any believer who rejects the doctrine of eternal security does not understand these two verses.

The key word in Ephesians 2:8-9 is the Greek word *charis*. According to the Lexical Aids (dictionary) of the New Testament, it is defined as, “A favor done without expectation of return; ABSOLUTE FREENESS of the loving kindness of God to men finding its only motive in the bounty and free-heartedness of the Giver; unearned and unmerited favor.” In light of this Greek definition, the following conclusions can be made in regard to God’s grace:

- It does not depend on who and what man is.
- It does not depend on what man does, whether good or bad.
- It does not depend on man’s work.
- It does not depend on man’s promises to God.

First Important Question

As a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, what exactly did you do to obtain your salvation?

If you believe that you have contributed in any way to your salvation, then you are not yet saved. Consider this verse:

For by GRACE you have been saved...not as a result of WORKS so that no one may boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

God views our contributions as “works.” In order to be saved, one must accept God’s formula for salvation in its entirety, which is “faith alone in Christ alone.” Failure to do so will cost you for eternity; therefore, it is vital that you understand this basic concept upon which salvation rests. On the other hand, if you claim that you did absolutely NOTHING except put your faith in Christ for salvation, then you have a measure of understanding of Ephesians 2:8-9.

Second Important Question

If you did nothing to obtain salvation, what can you do to lose it? The answer is very simple: NOTHING. Let me expound upon this answer. If God gave salvation to a person based on a condition, such as good behavior, it makes sense to conclude that if this behavior was altered, God would take away salvation. On the other hand, if the gift of salvation does not depend on a condition, it can be concluded that salvation cannot be taken away. This second scenario is the reality, as seen in Ephesians 2:8-9.

Salvation: A Gift Issue

Romans 6:23b reads, “but the free GIFT of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” A gift is just that; a gift. A true gift is characterized by the following:

- It does not depend on the recipient’s behavior.
- A true gift does not and cannot depend on the recipient’s achievements.
- It does not depend on the quality of the recipient.

A true gift is non-retrievable. It is absolutely irrevocable! When the gift is given, it cannot be withdrawn no matter what. This applies to the gift of salvation:

The FREE GIFT of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23b).

God’s Gift Is Irrevocable

For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable (Romans 11:29).

It would be inconsistent for a believer who accepts Romans 11:29 as divinely inspired to reject the doctrine of eternal security. There are two major reasons why people reject this doctrine. The first reason is tradition. Many people are not willing to challenge tradition with the truth of Scripture. In essence, they are willing to rely on man’s interpretation of Scripture rather than the Holy Spirit’s. The

second reason is ignorance. Many people have priorities other than studying the Word of God and, therefore, have little understanding of spiritual concepts.

Consider the following verses:

But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 6:23b).

For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable (Romans 11:29).

In Romans 11:29, the “gifts of God” are not specified; however, Romans 6:23b reads, “the free gift of God is eternal life,” defining one of God’s gifts. This example can be substituted in the verse to read: “For the gifts [eternal life] and the calling of God are irrevocable.” This simply means that once God gives a believer eternal life, that gift is IRREVOCABLE.

God’s Work Is Perfect

His work is perfect (Deuteronomy 32:4a).

God is perfect. His work always reflects this perfection. He does not need to change or improve upon any of His work. With this in mind, a believer should know that once God has imputed His perfect righteousness (Romans 3:22) to the person who has simply put his entire trust in Christ, that righteousness remains forever.

Here are some important questions: Does the imputation of God’s righteousness depend on the recipient? Does God know the future failures of the individual before imputing His righteousness to him? Let the Bible answer these questions:

Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; [before conception] and in Your book were all written, the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them (Psalm 139:16).

It is clear that God, in His omniscience (all knowing), knows the future of every person before they are even born; therefore, God's gift of righteousness cannot be based on a condition (or behavior) of the recipient because He knew in eternity past that man would fail. It is out of character for Him to give a gift knowing that He would one day take it back. The logical conclusion is that God's gift of salvation is secure. In light of God's work, the Bible declares:

I know that everything God does [including providing salvation] WILL REMAIN FOREVER; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for God has so worked that men should fear Him (Ecclesiastes 3:14).

There is nothing to add to His work because it is PERFECT (Deuteronomy 32:4).

God The Perfect Builder

For we are ... God's building (1 Corinthians 3:9).

Imagine a civil engineer building a structure. He constructs a solid foundation for the structure to rest on. He mounts the cornerstones that will hold the building intact. He carefully selects sturdy bricks and cement. He mixes the cement. Finally, he begins to put the bricks on the foundation, one on top of the other, until the entire building is completed.

Similarly, believers all together are viewed as a house made by God. As the perfect Architect, He has constructed an unparalleled foundation. The apostle Paul put it this way:

For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11).

The Lord Jesus Christ is also the cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20).

All believers are the bricks selected for building God's house:

You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5a).

God in His matchless grace picks up useless stones (all believers) and prepares them for His house. It is arrogant and blasphemous to say that God could lose any of the stones that He has selected. It is impossible to remove a believer who has been placed by God on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul expressed it beautifully:

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities [Satan and his demons] nor things present [including a believer's present failures], nor things to come [including the resurrection of the church], nor powers [including God's power], nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us [all believers] from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39).

Any believer who suggests that God would remove a believer from His house (removal or loss of salvation) is claiming that God's work is not perfect.

Eternal Security At A Glance

Every believer will be saved. The apostle Paul wrote:

Now if any man builds on the foundation [Jesus Christ] with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day [resurrection of the church + judgment seat of Christ] will show it because it [his work] is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he [spiritual believer] has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work [carnal believer] is burned up, he will suffer loss [loss of reward only—not loss of salvation]; though he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).

At first glance, one would think that Paul was merely addressing the differences between the works of the spiritual and carnal believer; however, if one looks closer he will see that Paul is trying to communicate a much deeper concept. The concept is that all believers, both spiritual and carnal, will be saved at the resurrection of the church. He does this by first establishing that both spiritual and carnal believers are “on the foundation,” which is Christ Jesus. Paul goes on to contrast the consequences of the works of the spiritual and carnal believer, declaring that the consequence for the carnal believer is not loss of salvation but a loss of reward. Why? Because all believers are laid on the foundation, not on the basis of their works, but on the virtue of God’s mercy; therefore, since works are not the basis for receiving salvation, works are not the basis for losing salvation. The apostle Paul writes:

He saved us, not on the basis of the deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy (Titus 3:5a).

Who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity (2 Timothy 1:9).

The fact that salvation is based on grace alone is the most difficult hurdle for legalistic believers to get over. Until they jump over this hurdle, they will not be able to comprehend the doctrine of eternal security.

In reference to 1 Corinthians 3:15, it is biblically sound to conclude that regardless of the lifestyle a believer chooses, he will be saved. If he is a carnal believer throughout his life,

He will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet as through fire (1 Corinthians 3:15).

The only major concern a carnal believer should have is this “fire.” What did Paul mean when he said that the carnal believer will be saved “as through fire”?

The Holy Spirit did not give an answer to this question in Scripture; however, a carnal believer should be concerned by what this might mean. Whatever it is, I believe that it will not be a good experience.

God The Father Holds The Believer

What many believers fail to realize is that eternal security is guarded by the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand (John 10:29).

Likewise, the apostle Paul wrote:

Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master [God] he stands or falls; and he [the believer] will stand, for the Lord [not the believer himself] is able to make him stand (Romans 14:4).

In light of this verse, it can be seen that eternal security is God's responsibility. King David understood this concept:

Salvation belongs to the Lord (Psalm 3:8a).

The prophet Isaiah quoted the Lord, saying:

My salvation will be forever (Isaiah 51:6b).

God is omnipotent and all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ:

. . . are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 1:5).

Has "the last time" taken place yet? No, because this is in reference to the resurrection of the church; therefore, it can be concluded that every believer is still under God's maximum protection.

God The Son Promised Not To Lose Any Believer

Jesus Said:

This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me [every believer] I lose NOTHING, but raise it up on the last day [at the resurrection of the church] (John 6:39).

He further promises:

... that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day” (John 6:40b).

How can a believer read these verses and still reject the concept of eternal security? Jesus said:

And I give eternal life to them [every believer], and they will never perish; and no one [not even Satan] will snatch them out of My hand (John 10:28).

Believers can cling to the promises of Christ because:

“He who promised is faithful” (Hebrews 10:23b).

God The Holy Spirit Seals The Believer

Paul the apostle wrote:

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise (Ephesians 1:13).

In ancient time, once a seal was applied to something, it could not be altered. A perfect example is the case of Daniel in the Old Testament (see Daniel 6:16-18). In reference to this ancient concept, a believer can understand the significance of being sealed with the Holy Spirit until the day of the resurrection of the church.

The apostle Paul continues:

You were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who [the Holy Spirit] is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1:13b-14).

In conclusion, once a believer is saved by faith in Jesus Christ, kept by the power of God the Father, and sealed by the Holy Spirit, there is no question about his eternal security.

Jesus Christ Is Called The Lion Of Judah (Revelation 5:5)

He is the strongest Lion of all time. He gives eternal life to anyone who believes in Him (John 17:2), and He provides eternal security for these believers (John 10:28).

- He made a solemn promise not to lose anyone: “This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose NOTHING, but raise it up on the last day [at the resurrection of the church]” (John 6:39).
- “For this is the will of my Father [not man's will], that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, may have eternal life; I Myself will raise him up on the last day” (John 6:40).
- When these believers fail, He defends them in the Supreme Court of Heaven: “My little children [believers in Christ Jesus], I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate [a lawyer] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).
- He promises to hold the believer with His mighty hand: “And I give eternal life to them [who believe], and they shall never perish; and no one [not even Satan] will snatch them out of My hand” (John 10:28).
- His signature on His Word: “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away” (Matthew 24:35).
- He prays for the believers (John 17:1-12).

Conclusion

God is perfect and His work is perfect. He is the One who initiated salvation by means of His grace (Ephesians 2:8-9). He is the One who purchased the sinner through His Son's death (1 Peter 1:18-19). He is also the One who sealed the believer with His Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13), and the One who keeps the believer by His power (1 Peter 1:5). With this in mind, meditate on the following verses:

Now to Him who is ABLE to keep you from stumbling [in any way], and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (Jude 1: 24-25)



“For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable
[Can't be taken back or canceled out].”
(Romans 11:29)

“If we are faithless, He remains faithful,
for He cannot deny Himself.”
(2 Timothy 2:13)

Buy Truth, and Do Not Sell It

(Proverbs 23:23a)

Are you aware that sound Bible teaching is a precious and priceless piece of spiritual jewelry? Indeed, church history has shown how difficult sound teaching is to come by, especially in modern day Christianity! So, when God from His oasis of grace leads us to the pearls of truth in His infallible and inerrant Word, we ought to cherish them without reserve. The Bible is the treasure box that holds your capacity to enjoy abundant life, to reap maximum happiness in life, friendship, marriage, business, and to enjoy unprecedented blessings for today and tomorrow; therefore:

“buy truth” [stay grounded in the Word] “for wisdom is better than jewels; and all desirable things cannot compare with her” (Proverbs 8:11).

[Truth]: For you are not under law BUT under GRACE (Romans 6:14b).

(Web 12/2015)