

The Doctrine of Eternal Security

ONCE SAVED – ALWAYS SAVED

“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;” (Titus 1:2).

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16). This verse is one most believers memorize and usually the first verse we teach our children. This precious verse is one of many verses in the Word of God that confirms **The Doctrine of Eternal Security, ONCE SAVED – ALWAYS SAVED.**

The doctrine of eternal security is very dear to my heart, for without the blessed assurance of one’s salvation and eternal security, the believer's walk would be overshadowed with fear and uncertainty, rather than joy and peace that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Sadly however, there are those who teach and hold to the unbiblical teaching that a born-again believer can lose his salvation if he sins. Based on this false doctrine, that would mean a believer loses his salvation as well as forfeits eternal life. This sounds more like probation than salvation. This teaching is so contrary to God's Word. Those who promote this false doctrine do err greatly, not knowing the Scriptures. They are false teachers that need to be marked and avoided as commanded in Romans 16:17. *“Now I beseech you, brethren,*

mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.” Scripture teaches the eternal security for the child of God. We are promised eternal life—not temporary life. The phrase, eternal life, is found 26 times and the phrase, everlasting life, is found 11 times in the Bible. The word ‘eternal’ is defined in Webster’s dictionary as meaning lasting for ever; perpetual; ceaseless; endless.

Beloved, let us take the time to be obedient to God’s Word and try the spirits of this teaching to see whether it is of God. *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”* (1 John 4:1). Before we continue, we need to also keep in mind God’s warning found in 2 Peter 1:20-21, about taking any verse of Scripture out of context. *“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”*

Scripture must harmonize with Scripture and the Bible is its own commentary. No scriptural interpretation should be based on selectively taking certain verses out of context. To claim a particular verse means this or that but the interpretation contradicts other verses is wrong. Example: in John chapter 9 we have the account of the Lord Jesus opening the eyes of a man which was blind from his birth. *“And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.”*(John 9:2-3). Some will take John 9:3 completely out of

context and build a whole doctrine pertaining to sinless perfection on this one part of the verse, “*Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents*”. This is a false and private interpretation. This interpretation contradicts other verses throughout Scripture and does not harmonize with the rest of the Bible.

Can a born again believer lose his salvation? NO! There is not one verse in the entire Bible that supports this false teaching. Unfortunately, there are those who fall prey to this false notion because they are not studying God’s Word. They are not aware of the warnings that the Holy Spirit gives us. Throughout Scripture, God is sounding the trumpet, alerting us to apostasy and its danger. Christ warned His apostles to beware of the leaven (doctrine) of the Pharisees. “*Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.*” (Matthew 16:12). It is depressing when believers allow themselves to be “*tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*”.

It is heartbreaking but obvious they either do not fully comprehend the gospel of Christ which “*is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth*”, or fall into the category of “*ye of little faith*”.

The Holy Spirit, through the preaching of the Apostle Paul, gives us the truth of the gospel: the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ according to Scriptures. (1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

On Calvary's cross Jesus cried with a loud voice, *"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"*. *"But thou art holy,"* (Psalm 22:3). Because of God's holiness, God will not, and cannot look upon sin. All sin must be judged. It was a divine necessity that God the Father turn His head from God the Son when He was bearing the sins of the entire world, paying the sin-debt for all mankind. Here we are at the heart of the atonement, when God the Father made Christ Jesus, God the Son, who knew no sin, to be sin for us. It was then that God laid on Him, Jesus Christ, the iniquity of us all. Jesus took our place and endured the wrath of God for all our sins: past, present, and future. *"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."* (1 John 2:2). *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* (2 Corinthians 5:21). *"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."* (Isaiah 53:5-6). *"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."* (1 John 4:9-10).

The believer's eternal security is based on Christ's one offering upon Calvary's cross for sin forever. The Lord Jesus Christ by Himself purged our sins and now sits at the right hand of God making intercession for His saints. Throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Holy Spirit emphasizes how great a salvation we have in Christ Jesus. *"By the which will we are*

sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (Hebrews 10:10). *“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;”* (Hebrews 10:12). *“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”* (Hebrews 7:25). Notice the following verse: *“For by one offering he hath perfected **for ever them that are sanctified.**”* (Hebrews 10:14). Who are the sanctified? Those who are born again! Sanctification is part of our salvation. Once again, based on the Bible - once saved always saved!

We see that eternal life is a gift of God. A gift is something that is given out of love and has nothing to do with the merits of the one that receives the gift. One does not work for a gift. All those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ receive eternal life. Eternal life is part of our salvation. God saves us by grace, and God keeps us by His grace. *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”* (Ephesians 2:8, 9). God makes it very clear that He wants us to know that we have eternal life and that it is based upon believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, not by living a sinless life. *“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”* (1 John 5:13)

What do we mean when we say someone is born again? A person is born again when he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ by receiving the crucified, buried, risen Lord as his Saviour. He realizes he is a sinner in need of a Saviour by accepting the

finished cross work and shed blood of Christ for his own atonement for his sins. When a person is born again, the miracle of regeneration takes place and the individual is a new creature in Christ with a new birth and a new nature. *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”* (2 Corinthians 5:17)

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). *“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;”* (Titus 3:5). *“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”* (Romans 6:23). *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”* (Ephesians 2:8, 9)

The very moment one gets saved the following occurs:

- Justification (Romans 5:1)
- Sanctification (1 Corinthians 1:2)
- New creature (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- Placed into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13)
- Becomes a child of God and joint-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:15-17; John 1:12)
- Sits in heavenly places with Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:6)
- Sealed by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30)
- Receives the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9, 11; 1 John 4:13)

- Receives the promise of eternal life (1 John 5:13)
- Name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life
(Revelation 21:27)
- Promise of the believer's blessed hope and a glorified body like unto Christ (Philippians 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
- Possesses eternal life (John 3:15-16)
- Forgiveness of all sins – past, present and future
(1 John 1:7,9; 2:2)

In order to believe that it is possible for born again believers to lose their salvation if they sin, they are suggesting it is possible for the children of God to reach a state of sinless perfection this side of glory. The Holy Spirit warns against this type of thinking. *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”* (1 John 1:8). Sadly believers do sin, we do fail the Lord, but we do not lose our salvation. When we sin, we break fellowship with our Heavenly Father, but we are still His children. We need to confess our sins so we can have restored fellowship. In no way do we lose our salvation or are we thrown out of the family of God. That is why we are instructed to confess our sins. *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”* (1 John 1:9, 10).

The Word of God teaches the doctrine of eternal security. What some don't understand is that God is keeping us day by day, moment by moment. *“Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:”* (Jude 1). Is Jude

lying? How can we be preserved in Jesus Christ if we can lose our salvation? “*Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,*” (Jude 24). Hallelujah, what a Saviour! How can a blood washed, born again believer indwelt by the Holy Spirit doubt his eternal security?

The Lord Jesus Christ is a wonderful Saviour. It is the will of the Lord Jesus Christ that we are with Him in glory for all eternity. Please take the time to carefully read John 17. This whole chapter records that great intercessory prayer of God the Son for His saints to God the Father. There is only one Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ and there is only one salvation.

Those who argue against the doctrine of eternal security are accusing the Holy Spirit of not being able to perform His ministry to the children of God. “*In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*” (Ephesians 1:13, 14). “*And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*” (Ephesians 4:30). God gave us His Word that we are sealed unto the day of redemption. “*Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:*” (Philippians 1:6). The day of Jesus Christ is the time period that is connected to the rapture and the reward seat. The Apostle Paul had that blessed assurance of his salvation and knew that God would keep him until that very special day. Paul once again makes known his

unshakable confidence in his God and Saviour's saving grace. *"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."* (2 Timothy 1:12)

The doctrine of eternal security does not give the Christian a license to sin as some believe. *"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"* (Romans 6:1, 2). *"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:"* (1 John 2:1).

We need to make sure that we do not confuse reformation with regeneration and profession with possession. There are those who seem to have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. These individuals have never been born again. They are wolves in sheep's clothing, hypocrites, pretending to be about the Lord's work. The Lord Jesus Christ addressed this in Matthew 7:21-23. *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity".* Notice that Jesus said, *"I never knew you"*. He did not say, *"I do not know you anymore."* Judas Iscariot was a perfect example of one who fooled others but he did not fool God. *"Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?"* (John 6:70)

The doctrine of eternal security is very dear to my heart. There was a time in my Christian walk that God had to deal with me concerning my lack of assurance of eternal security. This prevented me from being a useful servant for Christ. I was constantly allowing fear to control me. The Bible has a lot to say about fear. *“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”* (1 John 4:18). It was the Word of God and the convicting power of the Holy Spirit that showed me the sinfulness of my compromising which allowed fear to get the upper hand.

God, in His great love and mercy, allowed a previous co-worker to invite me to visit the church associated with the Bible Institute that he was attending. We made arrangements to attend the morning service. When we arrived that bright Sunday morning I had no idea that this was the beginning of a major turning point in my Christian walk.

Before the service, my co-worker introduced me to the pastor and a few others. They made me feel welcomed and glad that I came. When the pastor started to preach, he was not too far into his message when it seemed this message was tailored just for me. The pastor was looking at the congregation and said, “The problem with many believers today is they do not believe God”. I started to feel convicted and realized I was guilty of not believing God. The pastor continued. “That’s right! You do not believe God! You trusted God to save you but you do not believe that God can and will keep you”. He started to preach on John 10:27-31. It was these four precious verses from God’s Word that showed me God was right and I was wrong.

I started to understand clearer what God's Word was teaching me about the eternal security of the believer: once saved—always saved. Yes, I was one who fell into the category of *"ye of little faith"*. My problem was weak faith. Roman 10:17, *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* and *"the just shall live by faith"*. The Biblical definition of faith is found in Hebrews 11:1. *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."*

Let us take a moment to examine John 10:27-31, Jesus' teaching on the eternal security of the child of God. *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."*

In John 10:14 Jesus states that He is the good shepherd. *"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."* There is no doubt that the sheep of Christ are those who are born again. The first verse of Psalm 23 indicates that as well. *"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want."* Those of us who are born again are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and He will guide the believer in all truth, which is the Word of God. The sheep hear and believe the words of God. Jesus gives to His sheep eternal life and the assurance that the believer will never perish. What does never perish mean? It means never perish! I believe God! God said I have eternal life and shall never perish and that settles it! *"Let God be true, but every man a liar."* If that is not enough, Jesus goes one step further and puts to rest once and for all this false notion of a believer losing his salvation and clears up any

other confusion. Please pay close attention to the following words of God, *“neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.”* Dear child of God, we have double security. No one will be able to pluck us out of the hand of God.

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:35-39)

I wonder if those who disagree with the doctrine of eternal security have taken the time to follow their theory through. Do they understand that if it were possible for them to lose their salvation that they will also lose all the benefits and blessings that go along with salvation? Do they fully understand that they are calling the Lord Jesus Christ a liar and denying the saving power and divine protection of Almighty God?

Once saved—always saved! Hallelujah, what a Saviour!
Hallelujah, what a Salvation!