

Eternal Security

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Eternal Security

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Prayer

Father we praise You today and give You glory for all that You have done. Lord, I pray that as we go through this study and as we continue in our lives that we submit to You. I pray that Your will comes to pass because Your way is the right way. We ask that Your Word be made clear and that we not be led astray by worthless controversy. Thank You Lord for Your patience as we continue to serve You in our humanity and fail. We ask for forgiveness of our transgressions. Father, Your word says there will always be an escape from temptation; that You always make a way (1 Cor 10:13). Lord, I ask that we be more aware of the exit and have the strength to escape. We ask this in Your Son's Holy name. Amen.

Can Salvation Be Lost?

To summarize for those unfamiliar with the salvation can be lost doctrine, the doctrine of lost salvation teaches that a person can essentially fall out of redemption by either turning their back to Christ of their own will and disowning their salvation or by committing a certain amount/“level” of sins that cannot be forgiven.

The general idea of this belief is that we HAVE to continually work to maintain salvation status. In essence those who believe this believe that they are saved by faith but they have to keep it by working.

Testimony

I was asked me to share on Eternal Security since recently the Lord gave me assurance on this issue because I used to preach that you could lose your salvation. While I shared my testimony at my local church, another opportunity to preach at a

Bible conference ended up not coming to pass as the conference shut down due to lack of registrations. Nonetheless, I put together this defense of the doctrine of Eternal Security, or as it has been called by Christians in the past, the doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints.

I believe I was saved as a young child when I prayed with my mom because I didn't want to go to Hell and called upon Christ alone to save me but I didn't grasp the relationship aspect until I was about 12. At 15, the Lord called me into ministry and I began preaching. I struggled with assurance of my salvation, of my security until I was about 21.

I always thought salvation could be lost. Probably for several reasons (none of which were grounded in the Word of God):

How I was Raised

The doctrine of my denomination growing up about salvation was that salvation was dependent on your faithfulness to a walk with Christ. Though "losing salvation" was

not preached in my Church growing up, there was a focus on saying a prayer to come to Christ and then if you “fell away” you lost your salvation. True salvation was not taught to be evidenced by continued faithfulness to sound teaching and discipleship in the Word of God and a subsequent new life as the mark of a true Disciple of Christ.

The Church I grew up in taught us to accept anyone who preached about Jesus. False prophets were never called out and the many of Scriptures’ teachings on how to deal with them were never taught on. Joel Osteen and others were in the book store and applauded by many in the congregation. I never heard a sermon that I remember or any teaching in a discipleship class explaining how people could profess Christ and yet not be Christians until I the Lord led me to fellowship at Raintree.

What I saw in Others

My conversations with other Believers that repeatedly likewise believed it was possible to walk away from the Faith.

Seeing many professed Christians who apostatized later. Some through their fruit. Others through actually becoming atheists or just saying they had chosen to not believe in Jesus anymore.

I came, based on observing the fruit, of many that I had known for many years and seeing them turning completely away from Christ, wondering if they ever had even come to Christ and if I could be secure and confident of my own faith.

What I Heard and Said

I struggled with many doubts.

Satan deceived and condemned me. Satan whispered that I, despite loving the Lord, wanting to know Him more and

faithfully serve Him in the ministry of the Word that I knew He had called me to, that I would end up a false prophet and antichrist.

Guilt and condemnation over having preached and written on losing salvation often bombarded my mind as I came in contact with a true teaching on Eternal Security. I had heard and taught that Eternal Security was a false doctrine because “those people” believed that if you said a prayer then a life of holiness did not matter, people just viewed themselves saved and sealed and then never grew in Christ. I found out that that is not what many who believe Eternal Security preach.

As I grew closer to the Lord, the Holy Spirit continued to cause an uneasiness with the embrace of false doctrine and worldliness in professed Believers. It caused me to despair over my own ability to stay faithful. It drove me to spend much more time in the Bible, seeking spiritual strength to stay faithful.

I praise the Lord and thank Him that He has been patient with me and continued to reveal the Truth of His Word by the Spirit who never leads us into error.

The Struggle

As I said, I used to believe and even preached that Eternal security meant you said a prayer and are saved but then are not accountable for living a spirit-filled life in holiness.

I confused saying a prayer and professing Christ as “salvation.” I misinterpreted Christ’s statement that whosoever called (truly calls in repentance, not just a go to heaven when you die ticket) upon the Lord shall be saved. Genuine surrender not conditional commitment. Yet Jesus says that there are false professors who may want Hellfire insurance, may do good things, but who do not know Jesus Christ; they have not surrendered in repentance to Him:

“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 many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

–Matthew 7:21-23 (NKJV)

In my misunderstanding, as I wrote and preached that people became “unsaved” I meant they gave up on asking Jesus to save them and stopped daily walking with Him. The problem I saw was many that ask Jesus to save them but never surrender to Him as their Lord. 80% of Americans have prayed a “sinners” prayer so that they can get a guarantee to go to Heaven or unlock “God’s wonderful plan for their life.” Yet, how many have not surrendered to Jesus as Lord? How

many do not trust Him alone for their salvation? How many depend on their good works or “spiritual” activities in the church? Jesus says something frightening, depart from me for I never knew you. I didn’t grasp what that meant for a long time. Backsliding from the Lord you once knew is not losing salvation (all the disciples did, Peter did multiple times); however, you will stand accountable before the Lord if you do. There is a salvation by the “skin-of-your-teeth” so to speak when Paul talks about being saved as one that has scarcely passed through the fire of God’s holy and righteous judgment in 1 Corinthians 3. Lot was saved from the fires of destruction but was saved by the skin-of-his-teeth. The Lord was faithful to Lot, but Lot sure barely escaped and he is not exactly a role model today.

Key Principles

Through His Word, the Lord showed me what He says. Here are some helpful short summaries that helped me remember what God's Word actually says in answer to my questioning heart:

Eternal security: Trusting Jesus to save you & be your Lord.

Purchase with Jesus blood—cannot be revoked.

To lose salvation: is to trust yourself to “stay saved” & not “fall from grace.”

Unbelievers never knew Jesus—so they must have given a vain prayer and not called upon the Lord.

What the Bible actually says

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away behold, the new has come.”

–2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

New creation does not become the old creation.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

–1 Peter 1:3-5 (ESV)

Born again does not need to be born a second, and third and fourth time.

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For if you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”

–Romans 8:14-15 (ESV)

Adopted not disowned.

“And this is the testimony that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever believes in the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

–1 John 5:12-13 (ESV)

Eternal life does not die.

“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 (KJV)

“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 (KJV)

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace

wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

—Romans 5:1-2 (KJV)

Salvation is clearly described as a Gift throughout the Scriptures.

Look at what else God’s Word says:

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

—Romans 6:23 (ESV)

“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

—Romans 11:29 (KJV)

“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;”

–Titus 1:2 (KJV)

“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

–John 10:28 (KJV)

“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, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

–Jude 1:24-25 (KJV)

“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; 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 1:3-6 KJV)

“But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”

–1 Corinthians 15:10 (KJV)

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I

came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

–John 6:37-40 (KJV)

The 3 “Losing salvation” passages:

Hebrews clearly says it is impossible if you could lose your salvation to regain it. Everyone I know who teaches you can lose salvation teaches that you can regain it and they usually use some passages from Hebrews—I know that I did when I preached that salvation could be lost. But that is unscriptural. Jesus cannot be crucified again for you! Plus 1 John says that people walk away from the truth and from Jesus because they were not of us (they were never saved, never part of God’s family the church).

Assurance:

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to

come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned”

–Hebrews 6:4-8 (KJV)

This passage clearly teaches as Paul uses a hypothetical example (as He also does in 1 Corinthians 15 and 2 Corinthians 13:5) that it is impossible to lose salvation. Here’s why, if one could lose salvation, he could not be re-saved. All those I know who teach that one can lose their salvation also say that they can be re-saved. The Scripture has NO teaching in support of that!

Read all of Hebrews 6 in your own Bible.

“That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

–Hebrews 6:18-20 (KJV)

Hebrews is a letter written to show that Jesus is the end of the Law for the salvation of the Jewish people.

“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves

together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.”

–Hebrews 10:23-27 (KJV)

Read all of Hebrews 10 and put it in context (don't jerk one verse out of the paragraph and philosophize).

Eternal Security in Hebrews:

“For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.”

–Hebrews 4:10 (KJV)

“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

-Hebrews 6:17-20 (KJV)

“Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.”

-Hebrews 10:35-36 (KJV)

“Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”

—Hebrews 10:38-39 (KJV)

“For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.”

—2 Peter 2:20-21 In context: FALSE PROPHETS, showing their true nature simply return to their former way of life. They never changed just as a pig goes back to the mud and a dog returns to eating its own vomit. Read all

of 2 Peter 2. It is possible to hear the Word, and even agree with its truth, without taking it to heart.

“He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.”

–Mark 7:6 (KJV)

So what is apostasy since it isn't a saved person losing salvation?

“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

–1 John 2:18-19 (KJV)

If it were possible to lose salvation, eternal life would not be eternal. And don't you think Jesus and Paul would have said a lot about it? They talked a lot about false prophets and false professors but not about losing salvation. There is a sin unto death, but praise be to the Lord Jesus Christ for the gift of eternal life that cannot be taken away!

There is sin unto death (where God will take you home or take you out because of your persistent sin, think of Lot)....

“Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his

own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and

drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.”

–1 Corinthians 11:17-34 (KJV)

“All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.”

–1 John 5:17 (KJV)

“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: And he is the

propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

–1 John 2:1-2 (KJV)

The key to understanding all of what Jesus taught hinges on how you respond to the Word of God. Look at the parable upon which Jesus said all others hinge—notice the true Believer compared to the three types of false “believers”:

“Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: “Listen! Behold, a sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and

immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.” And he said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, so that “they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.”

And he said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? The sower sows the word. And these are the ones along the

path, where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.”

-Mark 4:1-20 (ESV)

In Closing

“Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”

–John 6:27 (KJV)

“let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”

--Hebrews 12:1b-2 (ESV)

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