

ETERNAL SECURITY

THE SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER

Eternal Security” is that belief that a person, once he or she accepts Christ as their Savior, can never again be in danger of Hell or Condemnation.

To understand eternal security one must first understand what Christ accomplished for us on the cross. When Jesus died for us He died a substitutionary death. This means Jesus died in our place. Where we earned death and should have been condemned and executed. A tremendous passage on Christ’s taking our place on the cross is:

Isaiah 53: 4-6; “Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried’ yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.”

As we clearly see, Jesus took our place on the cross. He was our substitute. In Mark 10:45 Jesus tells the Disciples that He came *“to give His life a ransom for many.”* The word ‘for’ in that verse is the Greek word ‘anti,’ pronounced ‘an-te.’ This word always means ‘in the place of.’ Jesus came to give His life a ransom in the place of many. Another verse is 2Corinthians 5:21. Here Paul writes that the Father made Jesus. *“who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf.”* Galatians 3:13 tells us that Jesus became *“a curse for us”* Titus 2:14 tells us that Jesus *“gave Himself for us.”* Peter in 1Peter 3:18, writes that *“Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust.”* As can be seen in all these Scriptures, Jesus died a substitute for us.

Ezekiel 18:4 declares *“The soul who sins will die.”* The penalty for sin is death. Romans 3:23 tells us that *“The wages of sin is death.”* It is not that Believers are exempt from this penalty. No. Our sins must be punished also. And they were, in Jesus, on the cross. Jesus took our identity on the cross. We were tried, convicted, condemned and executed in the person of Jesus Christ. Since we have been executed, as far as the Law is concerned, we are dead. Paul in Galatians 2:19, wrote; *“For through the Law I died to the Law...”* In verse 20 he writes; *“I have been crucified with Christ...”* In Romans 7:4 Paul tells us “you also were made to die to the Law through the body of “Christ”

What about the sins we are guilty of? Colossians 2:14 tells us that God “cancelled” out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.” Jesus, as our substitute, took our guilt upon Himself and God punished Him for all our sins, past present and future.

Therefore, since we have died with Christ, and all of our sin has been paid for, we can no longer come under the condemnation of the law. Romans 7:6 tells us *“we have been released from the Law.”* The only way to be released from the law is to be dead.

We are told in Romans 10:4 *that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”*

This is why Paul can write, in Romans 5:1, *“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”*

Because the law has already tried, condemned and executed us it can never again bring an accusation of guilt upon us. We are dead to the law. We can never again be condemned.

This is why we are eternally secure. Nothing can condemn us. We can never again be accused of violating God’s Law.

But it goes beyond that. Not only did Jesus take our guilt but we took on His righteousness. Paul, in Philippians 3:9, in speaking of his own righteousness, writes,

“not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.” God made Jesus *“who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”*

Jesus took on our identity and was executed in our place. We took on God’s righteousness. See also Romans 3:21-22,24-28 4:5 5:9 8:30. 1Corinthians 6:11 Galatians 2:16-21.

Having God’s righteousness applied to us, we have been justified, declared ‘not guilty,’ before God. Romans 5:1 declares *“Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Since Christ has taken on our guilt and been executed in our place and since we have taken on God’s righteousness, who can ever condemn us? That question is asked in Romans 8:33-34. This is Paul’s answer;

“God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.”

Condemnation in Hell is God’s punishment for sin. If God has already justified us, declared us ‘not guilty,’ who else can condemn us? It was Christ who died in our place and God, in raising Jesus declared His acceptance of Jesus’ payment for our sin. Jesus is now interceding for us against the accuser, Satan.

See Revelation 12:9, 1John 2:1 and Hebrews 7:25. Paul in Romans 5:10, tells us, *“having been reconciled’ to God, ‘we shall be saved by His (Jesus) life.’* It is the fact that Jesus ever lives to intercede for us that guarantees that we will never have to pay for our sin ourselves.

So, our legal standing before God is this: First, we have been tried, condemned, and executed by the Law, in the person of Jesus. Therefore, as far as the Law is concerned, we can never again be accused of violating God’s Law since we are dead. Second, we have taken on God’s righteousness.

This means that, legally before God, we are as holy and righteous as God Himself.

Since it is God who condemns, and He has already declared us 'not guilty,' and since it is Jesus who died in our place, and God has already declared His acceptance of the substitute, then we can never come under condemnation. We are eternally secure in our salvation. Third, we are regularly accused before God by Satan. Jesus, however, stands defending us before the Father against all accusations.

This is why Jesus, in John 10:28-29, in speaking of Believers, says;

“And I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. 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.”

When Jesus said 'no one' or 'man' (KJ), He included the saved person himself. The only way a person can lose their salvation is if they are stronger than Jesus and stronger than the Father.

Paul is expressing the Believer’s eternal security in Romans 8:31-39. In v31 he asks *“If God is for us who is against us?”*

Obviously, it does not matter who is against us. In Verse 35 Paul asks, *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”* The rest of verse 35 and verses 36-39 answer this question. In reading these verses we can see that no one and nothing can ever separate us from the love of Christ. In other words, no one and nothing can ever take our salvation from us.

The usual problem we have with eternal security is that we cannot see how we can be saved when we sin after becoming a Christian. Notice the phrase *‘nor things to come’ cannot separate us from the “love of God”, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord..* Therefore, no matter what sin we get involved in, it cannot separate us from the love of God. David though committing adultery and murder, did not lose his salvation. He lost the joy but not the salvation

(Psalm 51:11-12). *“Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit.”*

What God does is discipline us. See Hebrews 12:5-13.

Paul, in Philippians 1:6, writes *“{For I am} confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.”* Notice that Paul gives no credit or a responsibility to the Believer. It is God who began the good work in us and it is God who will complete it. Since it is none of us and all of Him, we cannot alter the outcome. We cannot lose it.

Peter also tells us that our salvation does not depend on us in 1Peter 1:5. He writes that we are *“...protected by the power of God through faith...”* Again, he is saying what Jesus said in John 10:28-29

“It is God’s power that keeps us saved.”

Jesus, in John 5:24, tells us

“he who hears My Word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgement, but has passed out of death into life.”

Our Lord says we have eternal life. If this life could end then it could not be eternal. The Greek word for ‘eternal’ is aionios.’ This word is always used to speak of time and never of quality. It is used in John 3:15-16, 36 4:14,36 5:24 6:27,40,47,54,68 10:28 12:25, 50 17:2-3 and many other passages.

Those who teach a person can lose their salvation say that the word ‘eternal’ refers to a quality of life. The only problem with this is that the word is a word of time duration and is never of quality. It is used in Matthew 18:8 25:41,46 and Mark 3:29 to refer to the fires of Hell. Saying this refers to ‘quality’ and not time. Quality and not time would mean that the punishment of Hell could be temporary, only of eternal ‘quality.’ Eternal means never ending. Jesus says that those who believe have eternal life.

John,in 1John 5:13, tells us that the reason he wrote the book of 1John was so that we could ‘know’ that we ‘have eternal life,’ again using the word ‘ainios.’ We can know that we have life that will never end.

Go back to Romans 8 and look at verses 29-30. Here Paul tells us that Believers are predestined to be conformed to the image of Jesus. Those He predestined to this He called, justified and glorified. If God has determined beforehand that He would make us like Jesus, who are we, or anyone, to stop Him.

In Isaiah 43:13 God declares :I act and who can reverse it?” Obviously, the answer is ‘no one.’ See also Isaiah 14:27. If God has pre-determined to make us like Jesus and has declared that He would would continue that good work until the day of Christ Jesus, who are we to stop Him? See also Ephesians 1:9-12.

We are also told in Ephesians 1:13 that the Holy Spirit has sealed us in Christ. Verse 14 tells us that we have been given the Holy Spirit as a pledge of our inheritance. This word ‘pledge’ is the Greek word ‘aarabon.’ It refers to money put down by the purchaser. If the purchaser chooses not to buy later on he forfeits his down-payment. The seller would get to keep the money put down by the purchaser. If we could lose our salvation then we would be able to keep the Holy Spirit since He was given to us as the pledge by God that we would get our inheritance with God. Then you would have the ridiculous result of the Holy Spirit having to go to Hell with us and spend eternity there with us as we pay for our sins. No, the Holy Spirit is our guarantee that we will be in Heaven one day with our Savior.

Jesus gives us assurance in John 6:37 that He will never cast us out. *“All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”*

One of the Scriptures used to teach loss of salvation is Galatians 5:4. Let’s look at this passage.

Who is Paul speaking of here? The Galatians themselves. They had been seeking to be justified by Law (1:6 3:3). Is Paul saying that these Galatians are lost, having lost their salvation? Well, look at how Paul has addressed them in this Epistle. He calls them Brethren in 1:11 3:15 4:12,28,31 5:11,13 and 6:1,18. In 2:4 he refers to 'false brethren.' If these Galatians had lost their salvation and Paul still refers to them as Brethren, then Paul does not understand what 'Brethren' means. In 4:6-7 he calls them 'sons' of God. in 5:1 he tells them they are free. So, if these Galatians are being told they lost their salvation then Paul is obviously confused. The conclusion we have to make is that Paul is not talking about salvation in 5:4.

So what is Paul talking about in 5:2-4? He is saying that if I seek to be justified by law then I have fallen from the way of grace. Galatians 2:20 becomes 'I live by law' rather than 'I live by faith.' If I do that then what benefit can Christ have for me in my daily life? Where would my sense of freedom be? Where would be the freedom to go where He wants me, to minister how and where He leads? Paul tells them in verse 7 that they were running well. Someone, through falsely teaching obedience to the law, hindered them in their race for the Savior (Hebrews 12:1-2). We are not free to run the race if we burden ourselves with obedience to the law Galatians 5:3. Christ can no longer benefit us with His freedom. This is why Paul again tells them, in verse 5:13 , *"you were called to freedom, brethren,"* Note: those 'severed from "Christ" and 'fallen from grace' of verse 5:4, are still called Brethren in verse 13.

If we take the opposite view and say that verse 4 is referring to loss of salvation we have a real problem. Paul is saying that obedience to any law as a means of being justified brings this about. The word 'Law' in verse 3 has the definite article and therefore is referring to Mosaic Law. The word 'law' in verse 4, however, has no article and is referring to any law.

The moment we see ourselves as more acceptable to God, justified, by doing or not doing something, at that moment we will lose our salvation, if this verse is talking about losing salvation. It would not be sin that brings this about but merely regarding doing or not doing something as making us more acceptable to God. Obviously, this verse cannot be speaking about of losing our salvation.

Another passage used to show that we can lose our salvation is Hebrews 10:26-31. These verses are speaking to Believers. This can be seen from the 'we' of verse 26 and the 'sanctified' of verse 29. The context is believing Jews who, because of persecution, are going back to the temple sacrifices to escape persecution (10:32-34). This declares to those around them that the animal sacrifices of the temple are better than the sacrifice of Christ.

The destruction spoken of, however, is not spiritual but physical destruction. This is the example of verse 28. We see this happening to the one committing immorality with his stepmother in 1Corinthians 5:5. Notice that this person is still saved (verse 5). Again, Paul talks about this happening to Believers who misuse the Lord's table in 1Corinthians 11:27-32. Here, Believers have not judged themselves correctly and are coming to the Lord's table with sin in their lives. Because of this, the Lord has had to judge their bodies with the result that many were sick and God had taken the lives of others ('a number

sleep'). He does this in order that we may not be condemned along with the world' (v.32) Obviously these Believers, though disciplined, were still saved. Those Believers of Hebrews 10 God will discipline with physical destruction unless they stop denying the Lord's sacrifice and repent. See also Hebrews 12:5-11.

Another passage used to teach loss of salvation is Hebrews 6:4-6. That this passage is also speaking to Believers can be seen by the words used in (v.4). For example, compare 'enlightened' with 10:32 and 'partakers' with 3:1 and 12:8. If this is speaking of loss of salvation then it is also teaching one who loses his salvation can never be saved again (v.6). This, of course, would make 2Peter 3:9 not true. While there are many interpretations possible of this difficult Passage, loss of salvation is not one of them.

Another passage used to teach loss of salvation is 2Timothy 2:12. The answer to this is (v.13). If we deny Jesus, Jesus will deny us before the Father (Matthew 10:33). That this is not loss of salvation can be seen in (v.13) Jesus will remain faithful to us because He cannot deny Himself. Rejecting us would be denying Himself since His Spirit dwells within us (Romans 8:9). But He can deny us before the Father and so allow the Father's judgement on evil around us to fall on us as well. We may lose all rewards (1Cor. 3:15) but we cannot lose our salvation.

"We stand before God Justified, legally holy and blameless. We stand before Him forever free from the Law's condemnation. We stand before God forever secure in our salvation."