

Once Saved, Always Saved?

The Security of the Believer

A. HOW IS A PERSON SAVED?

1. Not by the Law nor by works!

“Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.” (Romans 3:20)

“For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt 5:20)

“For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.” (Isaiah 64:6)

“But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.” (Romans 11:6)

2. But by grace through faith!

“For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law” (Rm 3:28)

“Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 3:24)

“But to the one who does not work, but believes Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness.” (Romans 4:5)

“For by grace you haven been saved 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.” (Eph 2:8-9)

“Nevertheless, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the Law; since by works of the Law no flesh will be justified.” (Gal 2:16)

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved? They said, believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” (Acts 16:30-31)

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” (Romans 1:16)

Salvation involves trusting the Right Object, for the Right Reason!!

1. Right Object = Jesus, God incarnate who died and rose bodily!

2. Right Reason = to fully pay the penalty of our sin, the death penalty!

A. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A PERSON IS SAVED?

1. Justified = to declare one righteous. A legal or forensic term. (Rm 5:1; 3:26)
2. Redeemed (Col 1:13-14; Eph 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Rm 3:24)
3. Forgiven (Col 1:13-14; Eph 1:7; Is 43:25; Ps 103:12)
4. Entrance into God's Kingdom (Col 1:13-14)
5. Rescued from Satan's Kingdom (Col 1:13-14)
6. Made Righteous (2 Cor 5:21; Rm 5:17)
7. Placed under a System of Grace (Rm 6:14)
8. No Condemnation (Rm 8:1; John 5:24; John 3:18)
9. Lavished with Grace (Eph 1:7-8)
10. Given Eternal Life (1 John 5:10-13; John 10:27-29)
11. Placed in the Body of Christ (Gal 3:27)
12. Blessed with Spiritual Blessings (Eph 1:3)
13. Given everything related to Life & Godliness (2 Peter 1:3-4)
14. Made Complete in Christ (Col 2:10)
15. Transferred from Death to Life (John 5:24)
16. Given Security (John 10:27-29; Rm 8:38-39; Hebrews 13:5)
17. Warm Relationship with God (Rm 8:15)
18. Adopted into God's Family (Rm 8:14-15; John 1:12; Eph 1:5)
19. Given an Inheritance (Eph 1:11)
20. Revealed His Mystery to Us (Eph 1:9)
21. Indwelt with the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13-14; Rm 8:9)
22. Regenerated by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5-8)
23. Baptized with the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:13; Rm 6:3; Col 2:12; Gal 3:14)
24. Sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13-14; 2 Cor 5:5; 2 Cor 1:21-22; Eph 4:30)
25. Reconciled to God: Enemy to Friend (Rm 5:10-11)

C. TWO ASPECTS OF GOD'S NATURE

1. He knows ALL things
2. He does not lie nor break His promises

“God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent; has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?” (Num 23:19)

D. THE SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.” (John 5:24)

1. **Has** eternal life (present, active, indicative)
 - a. Presently possesses eternal life, not you will possess.
 - b. How long does eternal life last? Time without duration.
 - c. If one had it and then lost it, was it eternal?
2. **Does not** come into judgment!
 - a. Come (present, middle, indicative)
 - b. No judgment! None. Ever!
3. **Has passed** out of death. (perfect, active, indicative)

Perfect tense means a past completed action with the results continuing into the future without cessation or duration.

Indicative = a statement of fact

4. **Into Life!**

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will 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. (John 10:27-29)

1. What things has Jesus promised us in this passage?
 - a. We have Eternal Life. How long is eternal life?
 - b. We will never perish. How long and secure is never?
 - c. No one will take us from Jesus' hand.
 - d. No one, even oneself, is able to take us from God's hand.

2. According to Numbers 23:19, does God lie, repent or break promises?
3. According to the phrase, “no one will snatch them out of My hand,” who is holding on to whom? Thus, who is responsible for maintaining the security of the relationship?

“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. For this is the will of My Father, 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 6:39-40)

1. Jesus does not lose anyone that comes to Him in faith.
2. Eternal life is the result of coming to believe in Jesus.
3. The future “will have” is talking about those yet to come to faith in Jesus.

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rm 8:38-39)

“Make sure your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He himself has said, I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.” (Heb 13:5)

1. This is a promise from the Lord.
2. It contains a double and triple negative for emphasis.

“From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.” (Rm 11:28-29)

1. The calling is referring to God calling the Jews as his chosen people.
2. One of the gifts is the gospel which is dealing with salvation.
3. Salvation, which is a gift, is irrevocable, i.e. unable to be reversed. Thus, salvation is like frying an egg not a bowl of jello.

“And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you **may know** that you **have eternal life**.” (1 John 5:11-13)

1. **May know** (perfect, active, subjunctive)
2. **Have eternal life** (present, active, indicative)

E. DEDUCTIVE ARGUMENTS FOR ETERNAL SECURITY

1. Modus Ponens type: In the Mood of affirming

If P then Q
P
Therefore Q

If salvation is dependent on the unchanging character of God then the believer is eternally secure.

Salvation is dependent on the unchanging character of God.
Therefore the believer is eternally secure.

If the security of the believer is dependent on the character of God and the character of God never changes then the security of the believer never changes.

The security of the believer is dependent on the character of God and the character of God never changes.
Therefore the security of the believer never changes.

2. Deductive argument (not MP format)

All men are mortal
Socrates is a man
Therefore Socrates is mortal

The security of the believer is solely dependent on the character of God.
The character of God never changes.
Therefore the security of the believer never changes.

3. Modus Tollens deductive argument: In the Mood of Denying

If P then Q.
Not Q
Therefore not P.

If a believer can lose their salvation then salvation is based on works.
Salvation is not based on works. (Rm 11:6; 3:28; Gal 2:16)
Therefore a believer cannot lose their salvation.

If a believer can lose their salvation then the promises of God can fail.
The promises of God cannot fail. (Num 23:19)
Therefore the believer cannot lose their salvation.

If the believer can lose their salvation then eternal life is not eternal.
Eternal life is eternal.
Therefore the believer cannot lose their salvation.

F. YES, BUT WHAT ABOUT ...

1. "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned." (John 15:6)
 - a. Lack of abiding shows lack of relationship.
 - b. John 10:27 – My sheep hear my voice and follow me.
2. "Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. (Rm 11:22)

This statement is addressed to entire group of people – Gentiles – not to individuals.

3. "Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles? And then I will declare to them, I **never knew** you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness. (Matt 7:22-23)
 - a. Never Knew = there was never a point and time that he knew them.
 - b. The verb tense is "aorist" which has the notion of point in time. Thus, there was never a point in time that he knew them. Thus, he did not say, I once knew you but no longer do.
 - c. Observe the "I know them" in John 10:27.
4. The issue of perseverance/endurance

Perseverance (noun)
Rev 1:9; 13:10; 14:12
Romans 2:7

Endurance (verb)
Matt 10:22; 24:13; Mk 13:13
2 Timothy 2:12

"But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul." (Hebrews 10:39)

Those who are saints will persevere!!

4. "For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put him to open shame. For ground that drinks the rain which often falls on it and brings forth vegetation useful to those for whose sake it is also tilled, receives a blessing from God; but if it yields thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned." (Hebrews 6:4-8)

Perspective: It is important and revealing that scholars who are of the same persuasion related to the security and/or insecurity of salvation disagree on the meaning of this passage.

So, we should take other passages that are extremely clear and use them to give us direction in the interpretation of this passage.

Option A: If this passage were teaching that one could lose their salvation then it is also teaching that it is impossible to ever get it back again. However, most people that think you can lose your salvation would not say that you could never get it back again.

Option B: These individuals are saved and it is impossible to save them again since salvation is a once-in-time forever event. It's impossible to renew them to repentance since they have already repented related to salvation. You cannot save a saved person since they are already and presently saved.

5. "For we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of fire which will consume the adversaries. Anyone who sets aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know him who said, vengeance is mine, I will repay. And again, The Lord will judge his people. It is a terrifying thing to falls into the hands of the living God." (Hb 10:26-31)

"But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul." (Hebrews 10:39)

G. THE ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER

1. When we come to faith in Christ, God knows everything we have done and everything we will ever do. He knows it exhaustively. Yet, with full knowledge he accepts us into his family. So, what will change God's mind concerning his acceptance of us? It cannot be new information about what we will do in the future since he knows it all.
2. When we come to faith in Christ, ALL of our sins are forgiven – past, present and future – on the basis of grace given through Christ's death on the cross. (Col 1:13-14; Col 2:10; Col 2:13-14) The only thing that condemns a person is sin but all of it has already been forgiven. So, there is nothing that could condemn us.
3. The only one that will judge us is Jesus and he has already delivered his verdict to us – not guilt (John 5:24), righteous (2 Cor 5:21), forgiven (Col 2:13-14), given life. So, there is no one who will condemn us.
4. The weight and clarity of the Scriptures is overwhelming on the side of the eternal security of the believer. Thus, we are highly justified in accepting and affirming this biblical doctrine.
5. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will 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. (John 10:27-29)

6. “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”
(John 5:24)
7. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are **protected by the power of God** through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:3-5)

H. HOW CAN WE KNOW WE ARE SAVED?

1. The decision to place faith in Jesus Christ (1 John 5:13)

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

2. The testimony of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:16)

“The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God”

3. The evidence of a changed life

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ he is a new creature, the old things passed away, behold new things have come.” (2 Cor 5:17)

“By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in him ought himself to walk in the same manner as he walked.” (1 John 2:5b-6)

4. The authority of the Word of God (1 John 5:13; John 10:27-28)

5. The character and promise of God (John 10:27-29; Heb 13:5; Num 23:19)

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