

Assurance Based On Conditions

The following scriptures suggest that our assurance of salvation and eternal life is based upon a condition(s). In other words, God expects us to continue with the contract we have made with Him. If we choose to reject it and walk away, I believe we could then lose our position as His child and eternal life. Spurgeon understood the strong words of scripture which forced him to conclude that the security of the believer was conditional.

Conditions: Relationship and Obedience

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one is able to 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)

These words of Jesus are wonderful words of assurance, but they suggest two conditions: 1) continued relationship with the Lord by hearing His voice; and 2) obedience by following Him. When we meet those conditions, we are promised that no one can take us away from God.

Condition: Hold on to Your Faith

"...but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house, whose house we are, IF we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end. For we have become partakers of Christ, IF we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end." (Hebrews 3:6,14)

These words from Hebrews suggest that we are secure as a child of God IF we keep our faith and hold on to Christ to the end. Again, our security is based upon a condition - if we will do this, then we are assured of God's salvation.

How You Can Lose It

Jesus said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." That is God's promise to us, His commitment. However, what if we forsake Him, take ourselves out of His hand? Is that possible?

"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 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.

This scripture describes a person who has experienced the reality of Christ and salvation through the Holy Spirit. Yet, they fall away and deny their salvation in Christ. There is no opportunity to come back. They lose their salvation.

Other Scriptural Examples:

There are other scriptures which suggest that a true Christian could lose their salvation.

1) Matthew 24:10: *"many will fall away" / II Thessalonians 2:3: "apostasy" (falling away from the faith)*. Both are references to those who were once in the faith and dropped out. You can't fall away from the Lord if you were never with the Lord.

2) II Peter 2:20-22: teachers who were once changed by the knowledge of the Lord and became false teachers and returned to their sinful ways. They lost their salvation.

3) Revelation 22:19 God will take away their part in the tree of life and the holy city. What's left? They have lost eternal life.

Assurance of Salvation and Eternal Life

You can be confident of your salvation and eternal destiny. When you CONTINUE to hold on to the ways of God, CONTINUE in your relationship with Him, and CONTINUE in obedience to Him, you will have the convincing, supernatural assurance of the Holy Spirit that you are eternally secure. Your security as a Christian is a joint partnership with you and God. *"...work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure."* (Philippians 2:12,13) Are you continuing to live for God and allowing Him to do His work in your life?

KNOW THE TRUTH



"...AND THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE."

Pastor Lynn Kern

Can you
be sure
of Your
Salvation?
(The Assurance of the Believer)

The "Eternal Security" Question

One of the great arguments among Christians through the years has centered on the question of whether or not a Christian can lose their salvation. The Bible seems to teach us that we can be sure and secure in our eternal salvation. *"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may KNOW that you have eternal life."* (1 John 5:13) Why, then, are there arguments about "eternal security?" Why is the question often raised, "Can a person lose their salvation?" In other words, can a born-again believer in Jesus Christ lose their position as a child of God and be eternally lost?

Most Important Truth

Though Christians argue among themselves about this "Eternal Security" doctrine, it must be agreed by both sides that the assurance of the believer as a child of God and of having an eternal hope is a basic teaching in the Bible. Every believer needs that confidence as the basis to faithfully follow God and His word. It is equally important for those who are unsaved to recognize their lack of assurance in order that they might see their need for God's salvation. There are many who assume they are God's children and have eternal life based upon the deceptive assurance of religion or man-made philosophy.

Knowing You Are A Child of God

Knowing that you are a child of God is the foundation of your Christian life. When a person is truly born-again and comes to have a supernatural relationship with God, there comes the assurance of salvation. *"The Spirit (Holy Spirit) Himself bears witness with our spirit (human spirit) that we are children of God."* (Romans 8:16) *This is a work of God through the Holy Spirit that confirms to us our relationship with God as His child. Thus, the assurance of salvation cannot be obtained through believing a doctrine, such as "eternal security", but must come as a result of the convincing, supernatural work of the Holy Spirit.*

Knowing You Have Eternal Life

Knowing that you are secure in God's love for eternity provides the hope to trust God for your future. *"And the witness 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, in order that you may know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:11-13) The Bible tells us that we can KNOW that we have eternal life. Again, the knowing comes as a result of the convincing, supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. No doctrinal position on Eternal Security will make eternal life real. The hope of eternal life comes as a result of relationship with God through Christ and the reality of that relationship. Knowing the resurrected Christ by faith makes His words of eternal life a spiritual reality and a Heavenly hope.

Assurance Based On God's Conditions

The disagreement about Eternal Security or "once saved, always saved" seems to come from the interpretation of various scriptures in the Bible. Those who reject the doctrine of "once saved, always saved" point to the fact that a number of scripture verses offer assurance of salvation and eternal life with conditions. In other words, a Christian's security is based upon our continuing to trust God in our life. If we don't continue, we could lose our salvation.

A "Cheap" Policy of Assurance

Those who support the doctrine of "once saved, always saved" are divided into a least two groups. There is a more modern version of the Eternal Security doctrine which teaches that once you have received Christ and are born-again, you can not be lost no matter what you do or how you live. They would argue that because you are a child of God, it wouldn't matter how far from God you could stray, you would still be His child. Once a child, always a child.

Eternal Security With Conditions

The more historic and fundamental view of Eternal Security was held by many of the great men of God in the past. It supports the view that a truly saved person cannot lose their salvation. However, it strongly bases that view on the scriptural truth that a truly saved person will continue to follow Christ throughout their life.

They base their view on conditions, also. The great Baptist preacher, Charles H. Spurgeon, stated the conditions for being eternally secure:

"The scripture does not teach that a man will reach his journey's end without continuing to travel along the road; it is not true that one act of faith is all, and that nothing is needed of daily faith, prayer, and watchfulness. Our doctrine is the very opposite, namely, that the righteous shall hold on his way; or, in other words, shall continue in faith, in repentance, in prayer, and under the influence of the grace of God. We do not believe in salvation by a physical force which treats a man as a dead log, and carries him whether he will it or not towards heaven. We never thought, nor even dreamed, that merely because a man supposes that he once entered this way that he may therefore conclude that he is certain of salvation, even if he leaves the way immediately. No, but we say that he who truly receives the Holy Ghost, so that he believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, shall not go back, but persevere in the way of faith. We detest the doctrine that a man who has once believed in Jesus will be saved even if he altogether forsook the path of obedience."

Were They Really Saved?

This view of Eternal Security also taught that those who did not continue to follow Christ were not saved in the first place. Though I believe that a person who was truly saved could lose their salvation, it is absolutely true that many who have made professions of faith in Christ were not truly saved. For whatever reason(s), they did not come to a "saving faith" that brought them into a life-changing, personal relationship with God.

God Knows, We Don't

From God's all-knowing position, we can conclude that God knows the end from the beginning and knows who were His all along. Thus, He knows who are His "elect" as the Bible calls them. However, we don't know who will continue to trust God and therefore must encourage each other to continue to follow God. (Hebrews 10:23-25)