

Appendix H

Eternal Security

1. The Meaning of Eternal Security

1) Basic Concepts

1 Pet 1:5 “who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time”

- The believer is kept by God
- Believers are kept through faith, not irrespective of faith
- Believers are kept unto final salvation, not temporarily or just for a while

2) Definition—**God secures and guarantees the final salvation of all true believers**

3) Clarifications

- Eternal security looks at salvation from *God's* viewpoint—God keeps the believer saved and safe. Perseverance looks at salvation from the *believer's* viewpoint—he will progress in the Christian life until the final day of redemption.
- Eternal security deals only with those who are truly saved, not just professing Christians. Only true believers are considered.
- Eternal security does not mean a believer may never backslide.
- God secures the final salvation of all true believers, and by means of this very security he keeps us from that practice of sin or apostasy which would lead surely to apostasy.

2. The Biblical Basis for Eternal Security

John 6:39 “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”

John 10:27-30 “...I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand...no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand”

Romans 8:31-39

Romans 11:29 “the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable” (irreversible, final, unalterable, unchangeable)

1 Corinthians 1:8-9 “who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ”

Ephesians 4:30 “do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption”

Philippians 1:6 “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”

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

2 Thessalonians 3:3 “the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one”

Hebrews 7:23-25 "...he is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him..."

Jude 1 "...to those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ" cf. vv. 24-25

3. Support for Eternal Security from Other Doctrines

- 1) The substitutionary atonement of Christ—If Christ has borne the penalty and guilt of sin, the believer will never face the penalty of those sins (John 5:24; Rom 8:34)
- 2) The faithfulness of God—God's faithfulness is his trustworthiness to act or perform in accord with his promise (1 Thess 5:24)
- 3) The power of God—God's power is omnipotent, but sin's is finite (1 Pet 1:5)
- 4) The doctrine of election and predestination—God's election carries the means as well as the end. Also, God does not alter or rescind his decrees (John 6:37, 39; Rom 8:29-30)
- 5) The seal of the Holy Spirit—The seal speaks of ownership. The believer is owned by God (Eph 4:30)

4. Problem Passages

There are texts that seem to suggest that a believer can lose his salvation or be in danger of losing it. These can usually be answered by noting the context or observing the real point of the passage. No text can contradict the plain teaching of Scripture which has already been demonstrated.

- 1) Passages which speak of profession as over against possessions (Heb 6:4-6; 2 Pet 2:20-22)
- 2) Passages which speak of the nation of Israel rather than a believer (Matt 12:43-45)
- 3) Passages which deal with the temporal chastening of a believer as distinguished from eternal security (James 5:19-20; 1 John 5:16)
- 4) Passages which speak of rewards rather than salvation (1 Cor 3:10-17)
- 5) Passages which have to do with assurance rather than security (1 John 2:3)

5. Problems and Objections

- 1) If the believer is secure, why the warnings (Heb 6:4-6) and contingent promises (e.g. Heb 12:14)?
 - God's means to secure the end in the case of true believer
 - God's warning to the mere professor
- 2) What about concrete cases which seem to contradict the doctrine of security?
 - Truth is settled by the Word
 - Our knowledge is limited

6. Practical Values of Eternal Security

- 1) It encourages true believers to work for God, 1 Cor 15:58
- 2) It gives assurance and joy to Christian living, Rom 8:37; Jude 23-24
- 3) It gives hope to timid and fearful Christians
- 4) It produces consistent Christian living