

## ETERNAL SECURITY OF BELIEVERS IN THE PRESENT CHURCH AGE

### I. THE TERM “ETERNAL SECURITY” DEFINED.

- A. The Term *Eternal Security* Does not Appear anywhere in the Bible. However, this Term Is Used to Describe the Bible Teaching that once a Person Receives the Lord Jesus Christ as His personal Savior during the present Church Age, He Is Saved for all Eternity and Cannot Lose His Salvation by Sinning.
- B. The Bible Teaching of *Eternal Security* Is Summed up by the Saying, “Once saved, always saved.”

### II. THE SINLESSNESS OF BELIEVERS IN THE PRESENT CHURCH AGE:

1<sup>st</sup> John 3:9

- A. Everyone Has a Spirit, a Soul and a Body (1 Thes 5:23) that Are Affected by Sin.
  1. Before salvation, the soul and body of a person cannot be separated until death (Gen 35:18).
  2. When someone gets saved during the present Church Age, the “circumcision of Christ” separates his spirit and soul from his body (Col 2:8-13).
  3. After someone gets saved in the Church Age, the sins of his body (Rom 7:18a) are separated from his spirit and soul by the operation of God (Col 2:11-12).
  4. Once the spirit and soul of a Church Age Believer are separated from his body, the Holy Spirit seals them from the eternal effects of sin until the “rapture” takes place (Eph 1:13; 4:30; 1 Thes 4:13-17; 1 Cor 15:51-53).
- B. A Church Age Believer Has a new Relationship (position or standing) with God after Salvation.
  1. He is a Child of God (John 1:12-13; Rom 8:16; Gal 3:26).
  2. He possesses (has) eternal life right now (John 5:24a; 1 John 5:9-13).
  3. He (his soul) is sealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13) and kept until Jesus Christ returns at the *rapture* (Eph 4:30).
  4. His soul and spirit are redeemed when he gets saved (1 Pet 1:18-19), but his body is not redeemed until the *rapture* takes place (Rom 8:23; 1 Cor 15:51-54; 1 Thes 4:13-17).
  5. His salvation is kept by God’s power and not by his own works or power (1 Pet 1:3-5; Jude vs.1, 24-25).

6. He is not appointed (chosen) to wrath (1 Thes 5:9).
7. He is a new creature, spiritually (2 Cor 5:17).
8. He is secure in the love of God, no matter what happens (Rom 8:37-39).
9. He has the righteousness of God imputed to him by faith in Jesus Christ (Rom 4:5-6, 17-25) and, therefore, he cannot sin (2 Cor 5:20-21; 1 John 3:9).

C. The Sins of the Church Age Believer Can Affect His Condition of Fellowship with God (his State) (1 John 1:3, 6-7, 9), but not His Relationship to God (his Standing) (John 1:12; 3:16; Rom 5:8; 8:38-39; Heb 12:6).

D. The Church Age Believer Can Lose His “Inheritance,” His “Rewards,” His “Health,” and sometimes even His “Life,” but not His *Salvation*.

1. His **inheritance** is lost in Ephesians 5:1-5.
2. His **rewards** are lost in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3:9-15.
3. His **health** is lost in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11:30-32.
4. His **life** is lost in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 5:1-5.

### III. THERE ARE THREE CASES IN THE BIBLE THAT APPEAR TO SHOW THAT BELIEVERS IN THE PRESENT CHURCH AGE CAN LOSE THEIR SALVATION.

#### A. The Case of the **Old Testament Saints**:

1. Old Testament Jews were saved by grace through faith and by keeping the Law, including the Commandments, the Rules, the Regulations and the Statutes of God (Deu 10:12-13; Heb 3:17 to 4:2).
2. Old Testament Gentiles were saved either by faith and works or by faith and conscience (Rom 1:20; 2:14-15; 12:3; John 1:6-9).
3. Both Old Testament Jews and Gentiles could lose their salvation because:
  - a. They were not born again by the Holy Spirit (John 3:1-7; 7:37-39).
  - b. The Holy Spirit could enter a believer (1 Sam 10:1, 6; 11:6) and then could leave a believer because of sin (1 Sam 15:24-26; 16:14).
  - c. The Holy Spirit did not seal them, like He does New Testament Saints (Eph 1:13; 4:30).

#### B. The Case of **Judas Iscariot**:

1. Judas appears to be saved because he was an apostle and did signs and wonders (miracles) (Mat 10:1-8; 2 Cor 12:12).
2. Judas was different from all the other apostles because he was both a thief and a devil (John 12:4-6; 6:70-71) and allowed Satan to enter into himself (John 13:26-27).

3. The death of Judas took place before the death of Jesus Christ (Mat 27:3-5, 45-54; Acts 1:16-18), therefore, he was still under Old Testament Law and not under New Testament Grace (Heb 9:14-17). For that reason, even if Judas was saved, he could still lose his salvation.
- C. The Case of **“the Unpardonable Sin”**:
1. The term “unpardonable sin” does not appear in the Bible. However, it is used to describe a sin that God will not forgive and one that results in the loss of salvation.
  2. Contrary to popular belief, there is more than one *unpardonable sin*.
    - a. During Christ’s Earthly Life, the *unpardonable sin* was committed by blaspheming the Holy Ghost (Mat12:31-32).
      - 1) This was done when men claimed that the miracles of Jesus Christ were being performed by the power of Satan instead of the power of the Holy Ghost (Mark 3:28-30).
      - 2) The word “because” in Mark 3:30 gives the reason why their sin was unpardonable. They said that Christ had an unclean spirit instead of the Holy Spirit.
    - b. During the Present Church Age, those who die without having received the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal savior, relying on their own righteousness instead (Isa 64:6), commit the *unpardonable sin*.
      - 1) No **real** Christian would blaspheme the Holy Ghost by saying that what Christ had done was done by the power of an unclean spirit (Mark 3:30; 1 Cor 12:3).
      - 2) Since the crucifixion, there has been a change in forgiveness (Mat 26:26-28; Heb 9:14-17).
        - a) There were some sins under the Old Testament that God would not forgive as in 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 3:14 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 24:3-4.
        - b) The blood of Christ is now available (during the present Church Age and under the New Testament) for **all** sin (1 John 1:7, 9; 2:1).
        - c) Christ now intercedes for (speaks for) each Christian to keep him in right standing with God (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25; Jude v.24).
    - c. During the (seven year) Tribulation Period (this is the “Time of Jacob’s Trouble” spoken of in Jer 30:7), the *unpardonable sin* may be committed by those who are left after the *rapture* has taken place.
      - 1) By those who worship the Beast or his image (Rev 14:9-11).
      - 2) By those who take the Beast’s mark, number or name in either their forehead or right hand (Rev 13:16-17).
      - 3) During this period, there will be no forgiveness for, and no repentance will be possible for, the sins mentioned above (Rev 19:20-21; 20:4-5).
    - d. During the “Millennium” (this is “the world to come” spoken of in Mat 12:32), the *unpardonable sin* will once again be blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

- 1) Jesus Christ will once again be physically present on earth (Rev 20:4-6).
- 2) Christ will once again perform signs and wonders by the power of the Holy Ghost (Isa 35:1-7), just as He did during His earthly ministry.
  - a) Jesus Christ will also make the animals behave as they did in the Garden of Eden (Gen 1:30; Isa 11:6-10).
  - b) Christ will also remove the curse that was placed on the ground (Gen 3:17-18; Isa 55:13).
- 3) At the end of the *Millennium*, Satan will probably deceive many people by claiming that he is the real God (as in 2 Thes 2:3-4 for example) and could not be held captive in the bottomless pit (Rev 20:1-2, 7-9).
- 4) Those who are deceived by Satan will believe that the power of Jesus Christ is not from the Holy Ghost but is from an unclean spirit, as was claimed during Christ's earthly life (Mat 12:32; Mark 3:28-30).

#### IV. THE "ETERNAL SECURITY" OF BELIEVERS IN THE PRESENT CHURCH AGE IS DEALT WITH IN EASY TO UNDERSTAND PASSAGES IN THE BIBLE.

- A. There Are **specific Verses** that Deal with the *Eternal Security* of Believers in the present Church Age.
  1. In John 3:18 the believer is not condemned and has everlasting life.
  2. In John 3:36 the believer is eternally free from the wrath of God.
  3. In John 5:24 the believer has passed from death to life.
  4. In John 6:37 the believer will not be cast out.
  5. In Acts 13:39 the believer is justified from all things.
  6. In Romans 6:23 the believer has the free gift of eternal life.
  7. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:21 the believer has God's righteousness.
  8. In Galatians 2:20 the believer is crucified at Calvary with Christ and is now living by Christ's faith and not his own.
  9. In Ephesians 1:13 the believer is sealed by the Holy Spirit at salvation.
  10. In Ephesians 4:30 the believer is sealed until Christ returns.
  11. In Philippians 1:6 God will continue the work He began in the believer until Christ returns.
  12. In 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:23 the believer is preserved blameless.
  13. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 1:12c the believer is kept by Christ until the *rapture*.
  14. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 4:18 the believer is delivered and preserved.
  15. In Titus 1:2 the believer is assured of eternal life because God cannot lie (Heb 6:17-20).
  16. In Hebrews 7:25 the believer is saved to the end (to the uttermost) because of the intercession of Christ (pleading or praying for believers) (cf. 1 John 2:1-2).

17. In 1<sup>st</sup> John 2:25 the believer is promised eternal life.
  18. In Jude v.1 the believer is sanctified (set apart or made holy) and preserved.
  19. In Jude v.24 the believer is kept from falling and will be presented faultless (sinless) by God our Savior.
- B. There Are **many Passages** that Deal with the *Eternal Security* of Believers in the present Church Age.
1. In John 3:1-7 the believer is born again of the Spirit.
  2. In John 3:14-16 the believer is eternally saved by believing in the Son of God.
  3. In John 10:27-29 the believer is eternally secure in the hand of God.
  4. In Romans 4:5-8 the believer has the righteousness of Jesus Christ by imputation (a transfer of something from one person to another) (cf. 2 Cor 5:21).
  5. In Romans 5:8-10 the believer is justified and saved (reconciled) by Christ's death (by the shedding of his blood) and His resurrection.
  6. In Romans 6:1-11 God considers the believer's physical body to be dead to sin but his spiritual body to be alive in Christ.
  7. In Romans 8:28-30 God predestinates, calls, justifies and glorifies the believer at the moment of salvation.
  8. In Romans 8:37-39 the believer cannot be separated from the love of God.
  9. In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:7-9 the believer is confirmed (approved) until the return of Christ.
  10. In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3:11-15 the believer can lose everything except his salvation (1 Cor 5:5).
  11. In Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-9 the believer has the free gift of eternal life (Rom 5:18).
  12. In Colossians 2:10-12 the believer is complete in Christ and the sins of his flesh are separated from his soul by spiritual circumcision, which is done by the operation of God and not by the believer.
  13. In 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:23-24 the spirit, soul and body of the believer are preserved blameless by Christ until He returns.
  14. In 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3-5 the believer is kept by the power of God.
  15. In 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:9-13 the believer can know for sure that he has eternal life right now.
- C. There Are **whole Chapters** that Deal with the *Eternal Security* of Believers in the present Church Age.
1. John chapter 3 deals with the new birth of the believer.
  2. John chapter 10 deals with the Good Shepherd (Jesus Christ) and His sheep.
  3. Romans chapter 4 deals with salvation by faith and not by the Law of Moses.
  4. Romans chapter 8 deals with the freedom of a believer from condemnation (guilt of doing wrong) and with the love of God.

5. Romans chapter 10 deals with Christ as the grounds for salvation of the believer.
6. First Corinthians chapter 1 deals with the purpose of God in placing the believer in Christ.
7. Galatians chapter 3 deals with the justification (being made legally right and free from the penalty of sin) of the believer by faith.
8. Galatians chapter 4 deals with the sonship of the believer.
9. Galatians chapter 5 deals with the liberty of the believer in Christ.
10. Ephesians chapter 2 deals with the transformation (change) of the believer.
11. Ephesians chapter 3 deals with the mystery of the Body of Christ.
12. Ephesians chapter 4 deals with the sanctification (being set apart as sinless) of the believer, and his union with Christ.
13. Philippians chapter 3 deals with the righteousness (being made morally right in God's sight) of the believer.
14. Colossians chapter 2 deals with the spiritual circumcision of the believer.
15. First Peter chapter 1 deals with the hope of the believer.
16. First John chapter 5 deals with the advantages of faith for the believer.

V. THERE ARE TEN MAIN REASONS WHY SOME PEOPLE DO NOT BELIEVE IN THE BIBLE TEACHING OF ETERNAL SECURITY IN THE PRESENT CHURCH AGE:

- A. They Do not Understand that the Bible Is Divided (2 Tim 2:15) into Dispensations (periods of time in which God deals with Man in a certain way) (Eph 1:9-10).
  1. God deals differently with Man in each *dispensation* and what God requires in one *dispensation* is not necessarily required by God in another *dispensation* (Eph 3:1-6).
  2. God sometimes gives Man the right to do something in one *dispensation* which He has forbidden Man to do in another *dispensation*.
    - a. In the Dispensation of Law, God forbade certain foods to be eaten by the Jews (Lev 11:1-47).
    - b. In the Dispensation of Grace (the present Church Age), God has given Man the right to eat the foods that were forbidden in the Dispensation of Law (Acts 10:9-16; 1 Tim 4:1-5).
- B. They Do not Understand that Salvation in the Old Testament Is not the same as Salvation in the New Testament.
  1. Salvation in the Old Testament was by grace through faith (Heb 11:1-40) and by keeping the Law; which included obeying (or accepting) the testimonies, the statutes, the regulations, the commandments, the precepts and the judgments (Deu 10:12-13; Psa 119:1-8).
  2. Salvation in the New Testament is by grace through faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ for sins (Eph 2:8-9; 1 Cor 15:1-4).

- C. They Do not Understand that “Justification” in the Old Testament Is not the same as *Justification* in the New Testament.
1. *Justification* is the act, process, or state of being judged as righteous (free from blame and punishment).
  2. *Justification* in the Old Testament was by a man’s faith and his works (Jas 2:21-24; Gen 22:1-18).
  3. *Justification* in the New Testament is by faith alone in Jesus Christ without any works of man (Rom 4:3-5, 24-25; 5:1, 9).
- D. They Do not Understand the New Testament Operation of God that Takes Place at Salvation, which Separates a Believer’s Spirit and Soul from His Body of Flesh. This Operation Results in a Church Age Believer Having two Natures, a sinless Spirit and Soul, and a sinful Body.
1. Man has a spirit, soul and body (Gen 2:7; 1 Thes 5:23) which are affected by sin (Eze 18:4; Rom 6:23).
  2. At salvation, a man in the present Church Age is spiritually circumcised when his spirit and soul are cut away from his body (Col 2:8-13).
  3. At salvation, a Church Age believer’s spirit and soul are quickened (made alive) (Eph 2:1, 5), placed into Jesus Christ (1 Cor 12:13; Rom 6:3-5) and sealed by the Holy Spirit until Christ returns (Eph 1:13; 4:30).
  4. At salvation, a Church Age believer’s spirit and soul are also separated from the sins of his flesh (Rom 6:6; Col 2:11) and they (his soul and spirit) become sinless (1 Pet 2:21-24; 1 John 3:5, 9).
  5. A Church Age believer’s spirit and soul are cut away from his body at salvation and he has two natures.
    - a. Before salvation, a man in the present Church Age only has one nature, a desire to please self (Gal 5:19-21).
    - b. After salvation, a Church Age believer receives a second nature, a desire to please God (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 2:20; 5:22-23).
    - c. These two natures of a Church Age believer are opposed to (against) each other until he dies (Rom 7:14-25; 1 John 1:8; 2:1-2).
- E. They Do not Understand the Doctrine of “Imputation” which Results in a two-fold Transfer of Righteousness and Sin.
1. *Imputation* is the act of transferring or charging a characteristic of one person to another person.
  2. At salvation, God first transfers (imputes) His righteousness to a believer (Rom 4:6, 21-24) and second He transfers (imputes) the believer’s sins to Jesus Christ (1 Pet 2:21-24; 2 Cor 5:20-21).
- F. They Do not Understand that there Is a Difference between a Christian’s “Relationship” to God (his Standing) and His “Fellowship” with God (his State).
1. His *Relationship* to God (his Standing):

- a. Before salvation, an unsaved person does not have a “personal relationship” with God because he is a child of the Devil (John 8:42-47).
  - b. At salvation, a Church Age Believer starts a *personal relationship* with God as His Son (John 1:12-13; Gal 3:26).
  - c. After Salvation, a Church Age Believer’s *relationship* with God cannot change because he is sealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13) and preserved in Jesus Christ (Jude v.1) until Christ Returns (Eph 4:30; Jude v.24).
2. His *Fellowship* with God (his State):
- a. The condition of a Church Age Christian’s *fellowship* with God can change because of sin (1 John 1:1-7).
  - b. As long as a Christian is walking in the light (doing right in thought, word and deed), he remains in *fellowship* with God (1 John 1:7).
  - c. When a Christian no longer walks in the light, he breaks his *fellowship* with God (1 John 1:6).
  - d. A Christian who is out of *fellowship* with God does not lose his salvation because Jesus Christ is his Advocate and makes intercession for him when he sins (Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2).
  - e. A Christian who is out of *fellowship* with God can restore that *fellowship* by confessing and forsaking his sins (1 John 1:9; Pro 28:13; Isa 55:7).

G. They Do not Understand New Testament Sanctification.

1. The word “sanctification” means, “the state of being cleansed from sin and being set apart for a specific use.”
2. There are three phases of sanctification: past, present and future.
  - a. Past Sanctification is “positional” (1 Cor 1:30). It changes a person’s position from being a child of the devil (John 8:44) to being a child of God (Gal 3:26). When a believer gets saved, the Lord Jesus Christ sanctifies him (cleanses him) from his sins and sets him apart for God’s use (Heb 10:10-12; Eph 2:8-10).
  - b. Present Sanctification is “experiential” (participating in) (Rom 6:1-14). It depends on a believer not participating in sin but rather yielding his body to God’s will (Rom 6:12-13; 12:1-2). As a believer daily reads and yields himself to the word of God (2 Tim 2:19-22), the Holy Spirit sanctifies him (John 17:17; 2 Thes 2:13; John 14:26).
  - c. Future Sanctification is “final” (Rom 8:28-34). It will be accomplished when God changes a believer’s body to conform to (make it identical to) the physical body of Jesus Christ (Rom 8:28-29; Phil 3:20-21). This phase of sanctification will be the final state of a believer for all eternity (Jude vs.1, 24).

H. They Do not Understand that there Is a Difference between Old Testament Righteousness and New Testament Righteousness.

1. Righteousness is defined as, “the result of acting in a just and upright manner (doing what is right).”
  2. Old Testament Righteousness:
    - a. An Old Testament believer was saved by his own righteousness, the result of his faith, good works and keeping God’s Commandments (Deu 10:12-13; Psa 119:1-9; Heb 3:15 to 4:2).
    - b. An Old Testament believer’s righteousness was cancelled when he sinned (Eze 33:10-13, 18), but his righteousness was regained when he turned away from (quit) his sins and returned to faith and good works (Eze 33:14-16, 19).
  3. New Testament Righteousness:
    - a. A New Testament believer is saved by his faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ alone (1 Cor 15:1-4; Rom 10:9-10; 5:1-10) and not by righteousness, faith and good works.
    - b. A New Testament believer’s righteousness is acquired (gotten) by his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 3:22; 10:4) and not by a combination of his faith and good works (Eph 2:8-9; Rom 4:4-5).
    - c. A New Testament believer’s righteousness cannot be cancelled if he sins because it is God’s righteousness and not his own (Phil 3:8-9; 2 Cor 5:21).
- I. They Do not Understand that a New Testament Believer’s Salvation Is Kept by God because God Is Faithful and not because the Believer Remains Faithful.
1. A New Testament believer has Jesus Christ living inside of him (Gal 2:20; Col 1:27) and God cannot Deny the believer because God cannot Deny His Seed, His Son Jesus Christ (Gal 3:16; 1 John 3:9).
  2. A New Testament believer is sealed (Eph 1:13; 4:30), preserved (Jude v.1) and kept (Jude v.24; 2 Tim 1:12; 1 Pet 1:4-5) by God being faithful and not by the believer remaining faithful (2 Tim 2:13).
- J. They Do not Understand that the New Covenant (New Testament) Was Made between God the Father and Jesus Christ and not between God and Man (Gal 3:16-17). Therefore, Man cannot Break the New Covenant and thereby Lose His Salvation.
1. The New Testament (New Covenant) is the promise of eternal life by God to Jesus Christ for completely obeying God’s will (Heb 5:5, 8-9; 10:4-12; 12:24; 13:20).
  2. Man cannot completely obey God’s will because Man is weak through his sinful flesh (Gen 6:3; Rom 7:18-23).
  3. Because Jesus Christ lived a sinless life in the flesh (2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:21-22; Heb 4:15; 7:26) and completely obeyed God’s will (Mat 5:17; Heb 9:28; 10:5-14), Christ is able to give eternal life to anyone who receives Him as Lord and Savior (John 1:12; Rom 10:9-10; 1 John 5:9-13).

4. When a person receives Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by faith (Gal 3:26), he is placed into Christ by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:13) and receives the free gift of eternal life (Rom 5:18; 6:23; 1 John 5:13).
5. Whenever a Christian sins, he cannot lose his salvation because he has Jesus Christ as his advocate, who pleads the Christian's cause and reconciles him with God the Father (1 John 2:1-2; Heb 7:22-25).
6. When a Christian sins, he breaks his fellowship with God (1 John 1:6-7). If a Christian does not confess his sin to God (1 John 1:9), he will be judged and chastened in the flesh by God (1 Cor 11:31-32). Nevertheless, he will not lose his salvation (be condemned to hell), even though he may lose his health and physical life (1 Cor 11:30; 5:5).