The Eternal SECURITY of Salvation

(He keeps me!)

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How secure is our salvation? Can we ever lose it? Forfeit it? Abandon it? Or have it taken away by God?

A. Various views of eternal security

1. **Roman Catholic teaching:** "Salvation which comes through the Mother Church can be lost by committing a mortal sin."

2. **"Arminian" teaching:** A believer will lose his salvation if he falls into willful sin or apostasy. (ex. Pentecostals, Charismatics, Nazarene etc.)

3. **"Calvinist" teaching:** Everyone who is elected to eternal life will persevere until the end, and will obtain eternal life.

4. **The Bible's teaching:** The Bible teaches that believers are eternally secure due to the faithfulness and power of God. Once a person has truly accepted Christ as his Savior, his salvation is secure through all eternity. "Once saved, always saved."

   Psalm 37:28 - "For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His saints; they are preserved for ever"

B. The Bible's proof of eternal security

HOW CAN YOU KNOW ONCE YOU ARE SAVED, THAT YOU WILL ALWAYS BE SAVED? Will the salvation of a genuine believer ever be lost?

1. THE **DEFINITION** OF SALVATION PROVES ETERNAL SECURITY.

If keeping our salvation depended on our works, we might lose it.

The Bible, however, declares that "salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9). It is a work originated by God the Father, wrought through Christ the Son, and applied by the Holy Spirit. The very definition of the word "salvation" argues for eternal security because it communicates a saving, rescuing, deliverance, and preservation from the bondage of Satan, sin, and sin's consequences (hell), and a permanent restoration and renewal unto God, making the believer a partaker of the infinite riches of God's grace.

The Apostle Paul gives a definite, clear description of how a sinner is saved by saying that salvation is "by grace through faith" (Eph. 2:8). Salvation is not "by faith through grace," which would place the emphasis upon man's faith; rather, it is **by grace**, placing the emphasis upon God and not man.

2. THE **BENEFITS** OF SALVATION PROVE ETERNAL SECURITY

If full salvation was not a present possession, we might lose it.
The Bible declares that a believer has already been saved (past tense); and Heaven's possession (with its blessings) is already ours.

1. **We have already been blessed with all spiritual blessings** (Eph. 1:3 - *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ"*)
2. **We have already been accepted in the beloved** (Eph. 1:6 - *"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved"*)
3. **We presently possess redemption and forgiveness** (Eph. 1:7 - *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace"*)
4. **We have already obtained an inheritance** (Eph. 1:11 - *"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will"*)
5. **We have already been sealed with the Holy Spirit** (Eph. 1:13 - *"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise"*)
6. **We have already been quickened (made alive) with Christ** (Eph. 2:5 - *"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)"*)
7. **We have already been raised up and seated together with Christ** (Eph. 2:6 - *"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus"*) (NOTE: V. 8 - "are ye saved" = Greek "you have been saved and still are" (perfect, passive participle)

The Bible declares that a believer has already been saved from...

the curse of the Law (Gal. 3:13 - *"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree"*),
from wrath (I Th. 5:9 - *"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ"*),
from death (see II Cor. 1:10 - *"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead"*), and
from destruction (II Th. 1:9 - *"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power"*).

A sinner who trusts in Christ becomes:

a child of God (Jn. 1:12-13 - *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name"*),
regenerated (Tit. 3:5 - *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost"*),
a new creature (II Cor. 5:17 - *"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new"*),
a heavenly citizen (Phil. 3:20 - *"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ"*),
an heir to God's grace and inheritance (Rom. 5:2 - *"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God"*; Eph. 1:18 - *"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints"*),
and complete in Christ (Col. 2:9-10 - *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power"*).

It is by an act of the immutable God that a believing sinner is...

"declared righteous" (Rom. 3:21-26),

sanctified (I Cor. 6:11 - *"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God"*),

perfected forever (Heb. 10:14 - *"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified"*),

delivered from the powers of darkness (Acts 26:18 - *"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me"*),

and placed on the solid Rock (I Cor. 3:9-15 - *"For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire"*).

Therefore, believers can know that they are:

of God (I Jn. 5:19 - *"And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness"*),

have passed from death (I Jn. 3:14 - *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death"*),

are "in Him" (I Jn. 2:5 - *"But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him"*),

possess eternal life (I Jn. 5:11 - *"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son"*).

In the future, believers shall be:

raised (I Th. 4:16 - *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first"*),

changed (I Cor. 15:52 - *"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed"*),

caught up (I Th. 4:17 - *"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord"*),

be like Him (I Jn. 3:2 - *"Beloved, now ar we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is"*), be with Him (I Th. 4:17 - *"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord"*),

and be satisfied (Ps. 17:15 - *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness"*).

3. THE **GOD** OF SALVATION PROVES ETERNAL SECURITY.

If our salvation was not resting in the unchanging character of God, we might lose it.

a. The Bible describes God as a God of trustworthiness.
"He abideth faithful" (II Tim. 2:13); "He cannot lie" (Tit. 1:2); and "His Word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). Paul had confidence in the trustworthiness of God when he said to Timothy "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've committed unto Him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12).

b. Secondly, the Bible describes God as a God of love.

1) God's love is unconditional (Rom. 5:8 - *"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*). Paul states that if Christ was willing to die for men though they were sinners, how much more will He keep them once He has saved them -- "much more then being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him!" (Rom. 5:8-9)

2) God's love is undeserved. (I Jn.4:10 - *"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*)

A man having been saved for many years is no more worthy of God's saving grace (a manifestation of His love) than he was before salvation or at the time of salvation. Men are saved by unmerited grace and kept saved by unmerited grace! (Rom.4; Gal.3:2,3).

3) God's love is unending.

Paul in Romans 8:35, 38-39 states that absolutely nothing can separate one who is justified by God (Rom. 8:33) from "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:39).

c. Thirdly, the Bible describes God as a God of power or ability.

A believer is saved by the power of God and is sustained by that same power. God "is able to save them to the uttermost" (Heb. 7:25); He is able to keep a believer from falling, and to present him faultless before the presence of His glory (Jude 24). The Lord Jesus personally gave assurance of eternal salvation when He said, "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (Jn. 10:28). The word "never" is extremely emphatic in the Greek; Jesus used a double negative (οὐ μη). The word "eternal" means "everlasting" and is found in either form in Jn. 3:15, 5:24; 6:27, 40; 12:49-50; 17:2-3). The Apostle Peter states that the Christian has "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time" (I Pet. 1:4, 5).

d. Fourthly, the Bible declares that God is a God of justice.

God, being a just Judge, has been fully and exclusively propitiated (satisfied) by the atoning, substitutionary work of His Son Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:24, 25 - *"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God"*). The justice of God makes the perseverance of the saints a necessity, because God cannot punish sin twice. It is impossible that the punishment be paid for once by Christ (Heb. 8:28 - *"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many..."*; I Pet. 3:18 - *"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit"*) and a second time by the ones who have at one time received a pardon. The sentence of justification is pronounced by God Himself and none can reverse it. "...It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" (Ro. 8:34). Paul triumphantly declares that those who are justified will also be glorified (Rom. 8:30 - *"Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he laos called: and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified"*) and God's work will last forever (Ecc. 3:14 - *"I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him"*; Phil. 1:6 - *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ"*).

4. THE **GRACE** OF SALVATION PROVES ETERNAL SECURITY

If our salvation did not depend solely upon the grace of God, we might lose it.

The Bible teaches that eternal life is dependent totally upon the Life-giver. To make life dependent on the believer is to dishonor the Life-giver, and to make man his own preserver. Hence, works would play a part in man's salvation and would thus nullify grace (Rom. 4:4 - *"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt"*). While believers are not saved by works but by grace through faith, the Bible is explicit that saving faith will be followed by works (James 2). However, even in works after salvation, it is "God" that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). "For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 2:10).

Paul, writing to the carnal Corinthians said that it is "our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful..." (I Cor. 1:8-9). The psalmist wrote, "For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance" (Ps. 94:14; cp. Heb. 13:5).

5. BEING **"IN CHRIST"** AT SALVATION PROVES ETERNAL SECURITY

If salvation did not unite us to Christ, we might lost it.

Every believer is inseparably united by the Holy Spirit into Christ's body (Rom. 6; I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:23-32). "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph. 5:30). Being "in Christ" is an extremely strong support for perseverance. "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). The phrase "in Christ" is found 12 times in the book of Ephesians alone! The believer being "in Christ" is a body part that will never be amputated.

6. THE **HOLY SPIRIT** OF SALVATION PROVES ETERNAL SECURITY

If salvation were not guaranteed, we might lose it.

Believers possess the Holy Spirit as a down-payment, promising that the Owner (God) will receive His possession (believers). Believers are both "sealed" (indicating security) and are given an "earnest" (a pledge being a guarantee) that God will fulfill His promises (II Cor. 1:22). "...Having also believed, you were sealed (past tense) in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view (future) to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory" (Eph. 1:13-14).