

ETERNAL SECURITY

What Does The Bible Say?

I. Introductory Remarks.

In this lesson we will be taking a look at the doctrine of eternal security. We will be answering questions such as, "Are Christians eternally secure? Can one be saved and then lost? Do some people go through a continuous cycle of being saved and lost, saved and lost over and over again? Is it possible for the Christian to live in the grossest sin and still have eternal life? These are some of the questions people have concerning the doctrine of eternal security. The answers are found in the Bible.

There is no question we are eternally secure as long as we remain in Christ. God has a strong grip on each of us and has no desire to let any go back into our former status of being dead in sin and cut off from Him.

2 Peter 3:9 *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

The purpose of this lesson will be to show you that our salvation can be lost if one totally denies the faith.

II. God's Warning Concerning Apostasy.

1. The Bible Warns Against Disregarding Rules Of The Spirit.

One destructive heresy that has been brought on the Church is that once a person has been saved there is no way he can again be lost. The great danger of this teaching is that it can, in some cases, turn the grace of God into a total disregard of any regulation or rules of the Spirit and the Bible. It can develop contempt for holiness and right living. People may think they can walk in any way and still be in God's way.

2. The Bible warns against old and new apostates – Jude 1:3-13

Jude 1:4 *"For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

3. The Bible Warns Against Falling Into Sin.

Old Testament Israel is an example to us. This God-chosen nation was a type of the New Testament Church. We can learn much from their mistakes and failures as well as their

triumphs.

1 Corinthians 10:11-12 *Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*

4. The Bible Warns Against Falling Away.

The Bible is clear that some shall depart from the Christian faith. They shall leave their secure position in Christ and return to their original position of being lost.

- **There is a falling away that shall come upon the Church.**
- **Some will depart from the faith in the last days.**

1 Timothy 4:1-3 *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith....*

2 Timothy 4:3-4 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*

The fact is that one cannot "fall from" a position he has not occupied anymore than one can come back from a place he has not been.

There has been and will be apostasy. They are the ones who "fall away" from the faith.

The word "apostasia" found in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 means ones who have defected from the truth of the Christian faith. It is a strong word implying revolt. It comes from a root word meaning to incite to revolt, to detest and depart. The word found in Acts 21:21 where it is translated "forsake" means to teach apostasy from the Law of Moses. We see then that the Word of God does acknowledge that there are people who fill this category.

A word of warning is in the Bible. If it were not possible to fall from God's position of grace, there would be no need of warning.

Hebrews 4:1 *Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.*

5. There Are A Number Of "Ifs" In The Bible Concerning Eternal Life.

1 Corinthians 15:2 *...by which also you are saved, **if you hold fast that word** which I*

preached to you; unless you believed in vain.

Colossians 1:21-23 *And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and irreproachable in His sight; **if indeed you continue** in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.*

Hebrews 3:14 *For we have become partakers of Christ **if we hold** the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end...*

2 Peter 3:17 *You therefore, beloved, since you know these things beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked...*

2 Timothy 2:12 (NIV) *...**if we endure**, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us;*

It says, "If we disown Him, He will also disown us." It is a simple truth that you must first be owned by Jesus before He can disown you. To be owned by Him means you are saved.

6. There Is A Point Where God Cuts Off Those Who Turn From Him.

If God did not spare natural Israel when they committed apostasy, what makes us think that God will spare us if we fall away. We must continue in His goodness otherwise we too will be cut off.

Romans 11:21 *For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. (See verses 13-22)*

Hebrews 10:31,38-39 *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, my soul has no pleasure in him." But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.*

This drawing back "unto perdition" or waste and destruction is a possibility or it would not have been written to warn us. The word perdition indicates loss of well-being, not of being. The destruction then is everlasting without annihilation.

I don't believe anyone knows where this cut off point is. We are not the judge nor could we because we don't have all the facts in each case and even if we did, we would not have the wisdom to analyze them. God is the righteous judge and there is a point where God says, "no more – that's it!"

7. The Bible Warns It Is Possible to Fall Away Never to be Saved Again

There is a point where the once saved are completely reprobate in their minds and actions. Hebrews 6 speaks of the once Spirit-filled Christians falling away to never be saved again.

Hebrews 6:4-9 *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, **if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance**, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.*

This scripture shows very clearly that there is a point when a Christian has backslidden so far that he cannot come back.

The Greek word for fall away is *parapipto*, which means to fall aside or to apostatize (*Strongs 3895*).

This person has given up his birthright in the same way that Esau did. This place is where backsliding has led to the ultimate place of disowning Christ as Paul warned Timothy of in 2 Timothy 2:12. This is what John refers to when he refers to the sin that leads unto death in 1 John 5:16. For this reason it is good not to even think about backsliding, because you open yourself up to the deception that could eventually lead to a sin unto death.

1 John 5:16 *If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.*

▪ These Spirit-filled Christians were once:

1. Enlightened - *John 1:6-12*
2. Tasted of the Heavenly Gift - *John 3:16 & Romans 6:23*
3. Made Partakers of the Holy Spirit - *Acts 19:2*
4. Tasted of the Good Word of God - *Hebrews 5:12-14*
5. Tasted of the Powers of the World to Come - *Acts 1:8 & Romans 8:18-19*

The words "fall away" describe the person willful and voluntary position. It means to walk alongside or out of the will of God with no intent of returning to God's way. This is total apostasy. There is an open renunciation of Jesus Christ and a gathering together with the enemies of Christ.

Hebrews 10:26-27 *For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.*

This "falling away" does not mean to fall into sin. A person may fall into sin without "falling away". Many of God's people are backslidden and out of fellowship with God and His people yet they are still His children, i.e. their relationship has not been severed, only their fellowship. However, the one who "falls away" will, of course, go back into sin.

1 John 1:9-10 *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*

1 John 2:1 *My little children, these things I write to you, that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

To "fall away" consists of total renunciation or disowning of Christ and Christianity. It is important to keep in mind however, that backsliding is where this process begins. Once a person begins to backslide he is opening himself up for deception and it becomes a downward spiral process until the person can possibly become so deceived he ends up committing apostasy.

- **The person who commits apostasy becomes twice dead**

When apostasy is committed they have committed the unpardonable sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit by "crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh". This means they consider themselves as dead to Christ once more. They are now twice dead as described in the epistle of Jude. When we were unsaved, we were dead to Christ and when we are saved, we are dead with Christ and dead to the world.

Jude 1:12-13 *These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves; they are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.*

The World Kingdom

Satan - god of this kingdom
in sin – unsaved

God's Kingdom

God is King
Saved – cleansed from sin

CRUCIFIXION IS DEATH
Romans 6:1-11

Dead in Sin
Ephesians 2:1-5

Dead to Christ

Alive with the world

Dead to Sin
I Peter 2:24

Dead to the world

Alive with God
Colossians 3:3

Our first position is here in the world.

To "fall away" and be crucified to Christ again is to return to this first position.

2 Peter 2:13, Jude 12
2 Thessalonians 2:3
2 Timothy 4:1-4

Our second position is here with God in His kingdom.

We are dead to the world and alive to Christ

Galatians 2:20
Galatians 6:14
2 Timothy 2:11-12

In the following passage of scripture we find a detailed description of those who have become apostate.

Hebrews 10:26-29 (NKJV) For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?

Verse 29 describes a person who has become an apostate. The person spoken of here is without question one who has been a Christian.

He was:

- **Sanctified by the blood of Jesus:** To be sanctified means to be set apart from the world unto God.

He has:

- **Trodden under foot the Son of God:** To trample under foot the person of Jesus and all that He is and has done. To count Him as refuse and off-scouring. This is an act of utter contempt for Christ.
- **Counted the blood of Jesus as unholy:** To value the precious, sinless blood of Jesus as that of a pig or unclean thing.
- **Done despite unto the Spirit of grace:** The Holy Spirit who he had received by God's grace he insults. He insults all the work of the Spirit he had been a partaker of, i.e. salvation, baptism, healing, gifts, fruit, etc.

III. God Will Judge His People.

The entire second chapter of 2 Peter describes persons once saved who have gone back and become apostate and the judgment that they shall incur.

Note that these people are still in the church as false teachers.

2 Peter 2:1 (NKJV) *But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.*

2 Peter 2:15 (NKJV) *They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;*

2 Peter 2:20-21 (NKJV) *For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. 21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.*

These People Were Saved:

1. The Lord had bought them - (Verse 1)
2. They had forsaken (to leave down or behind, to abandon, to forsake) the way. - (Verse 15)
3. They had escaped the pollutions (uncleanness) of the world.
4. They are again entangled and overcome in the world. - (Verse 20).
5. They had known the way of righteousness and turned from it. - (Verse 21).

2 Peter 2:2 (NKJV) *And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.*

2 Peter 2:12-13 (NKJV) *But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, 13 and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you,*

2 Peter 2:15 (NKJV) *They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;*

2 Peter 2:22 (NKJV) *But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."*

These People:

1. Are among God's people yet, they are spots (stains or blemishes, disgraceful defects) in the Christian's feasts of love. - (Verse 13).
2. They Deny Jesus. - (Verse 1).
3. Walk in destructive ways. - (Verses 2,10,20).
4. Disrupt, cause division and are the cause of others walking away from God. - (Verses 3,18-19).
5. Return to their former lifestyle. - (Verses 20-22).
6. Are in the ministry for profit. - (Verse 15).
7. Will utterly perish in their own corruption. - (Verses 12-13).

God's word is that He will not spare them but they will receive just judgment.

IV. The Lamb's Book of Life.

Can one's name be removed from the Lamb's Book of Life once it has been written there? From the following scriptures we should be able to see that the names are pre-written and can be removed.

All who dwell on the earth, whose names have not been written in the Lamb's Book of

Life will worship the beast.

Revelation 13:7 *It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

Revelation 17:8 *...and those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

Assuming the Lamb's Book of Life of Philippians 4:3 and Revelation 20:12-15, and Revelation 1:27 are the same as God's book of Exodus 32:32-33, the names are pre-written and can be removed. The one who sins against God is removed from His Book.

Exodus 32:32 *"Yet now, if You will forgive their sin; but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written." And the LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book..."*

Psalms 69:28 *Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.*

V. Scriptures That Seem to Point Towards Eternal Security.

There are some scriptures that seem to say that a person once saved is always saved, regardless of what his lifestyle might be. However let's look at them in context of scripture.

John 10:27-30 *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone 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 My Father's hand."*

1. "I give them eternal life" - They have eternal life from the time they are born again. It is theirs!
2. "They shall never perish" - Wonderful! There is no chance of them being with the ones who perish!
3. "Neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand...and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand."

The promise is that none can seize or catch away anyone who is in the protection and security of His authority and power. It does not say that we cannot remove ourselves by disowning the One who bought and paid for our salvation.

These scriptures say in context, that anyone who hears (gives audience) to the truth and instruction of God so that it produces action to "follow" (to be in the same way) is totally secure. The point being, we must have Jesus as Lord of our lives and be in submission to Him and become His disciple (not just pray the sinner's prayer and go our own way). There must be repentance, i.e. a turning from our former way of life unto God.

Romans 8:35-39 *"Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ?... For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

There is nothing that will keep God from loving us. John 3:16 implies that God does love even them who are still in sin and unsaved. However, although it was this great love that sent Jesus to die for the world, God requires that we respond to His love and receive Jesus as Lord and savior.

Only the person himself can turn from God's love and reject it. The example of being chosen by God and then lost is brought out in the ministry of Jesus. Judas was chosen by Jesus then lost

John 17:1 *"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*

So then we see from the Bible that one can be lost after once being saved. However,

Hebrews 6:9 *But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner.*

VI. Summary & Conclusion.

- God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.
- There is a strong warning against a disregard for rules and falling into sin.
- A person who continues to live a life of sin with no desire for repentance has probably never been saved.

- Some will fall away and deny the faith in the last days prior to Christ's coming.
- There are a number of "ifs" in the Bible concerning Eternal Life.
- There is a point where God cuts off those who have turned from Him.
- Backsliding does not necessarily mean one has lost their salvation. A backslider is on shaky ground, because he has now opened himself up to Satan's deception and is no longer under God's protective covering.
- Backsliding can lead to apostasy and the sin unto death or blaspheming the Holy Spirit.
- There are two deaths – one before we were in Christ and one when apostasy or disowning Christ occurs.
- God will judge those who have committed apostasy to eternal damnation in hell.
- It is possible to have your name erased from the Lamb's Book of Life.
- There are some Scriptures that can be confused, if not read with the proper understanding of how they relate to other Scriptures, as eternal security.
- God expects us to do better things than committing apostasy. He will extend a lot of grace to us, before it ever happens.