

# A Most Comforting Doctrine

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Jesus said, “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.” (Jn. 10:27-29)

From this statement some have concocted doctrines (teachings) of “eternal security,” relying so heavily on them that no other statements in the Scriptures matter at all. Such great emphasis is placed upon “no one is able to *snatch* them” that even the plain meaning is lost – why, not even *you yourself* could snatch you out of the hand of Christ and God. When was the last time you were able to *snatch* yourself from or out of anything? No, this is a complete distortion of what the very word means as only others can “snatch” you in this sense just as you can only “snatch” other people or things. But “theologians” bend over backwards to concoct a “once saved, always saved” or “eternal security” *doctrine* or *creed* from this passage nonetheless.

Let us consider but a few of the other Scriptures that touch upon this issue:

- Jesus, in His explanation of the parable of the sower, said, “Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear, then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away.” (Lk. 8:11-13) Is something beyond belief required for salvation? Certainly obedience must accompany salvation (Heb. 6:9) but do we dare attach some other requirement to the entryway into God’s salvation? If all who simply believe in Christ Jesus are not saved, then what hope do any of us have of adding some other work by which we might be saved? No, salvation is entered into by belief alone – no other work or condition is required to enter. Yet here Jesus says that some “believe *for a while*” but then fall away. (v. 13)

- Paul wrote, “Because of unbelief they [the Jewish adherents to the Law and the Old Covenant] were broken off, and you [the New Covenant believers] stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God; on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.” (Rom. 11:20-22) Paul clearly warns New Covenant believers of the danger of their being cut off from the root and vine (Christ Jesus Himself – Jn. 15:1), warning them of the need to “*continue* in His goodness” so that they will not be “*cut off* like the Israelites had been. (v. 22)

- For those who have been once enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift (Paul said, “By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” –

Eph. 2:8-9), who have become partakers of the Holy Spirit (that same Spirit by which we were *all* baptized into one body and we have *all* been made to drink into that *one* Spirit – 1 Cor. 12:13), who have tasted the good word of God (“the implanted word, which is able to save your souls” – Jas. 1:21) and who have experienced the powers of the age to come – for these, *if they fall away*, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance. (Heb. 6:4-6) How is the salvation from which these fall away any different from the salvation we all experience? There is no difference – the writer of Hebrews is referring to *some* who fall away from a salvation that is common to *all*.

There are other passages that could be examined at this time but these should suffice to show that there are other factors to be considered beyond “once saved, always saved” and “eternal security.”

The real questions we ought to consider are these:

- 1) *Why* do “theologians” need this doctrine of “eternal security”? And,
- 2) What happens to us when we adhere to this doctrine?

“Eternal security” is indeed a most comforting doctrine. Why, we need only practice a few certain religious rites (never mind that various sects – denominations – have differing views on which rites and how those rites should be performed!) and, no matter how we live our life afterward (oh, I suppose we shouldn’t be too grossly immoral or evil), we have “fire insurance” and we can be oh-so-cozy and comfortable knowing that we are saved, we can never become unsaved again and we will spend eternity soaking up the blessings of God as a reward for having given lip service to Christ and God while we lived our lives in luxury, self-indulgence and lawlessness (doing whatever is right in our own eyes – Jdgs. 21:25) In short, “theologians” need a doctrine of “eternal security” to justify their carnal lives. Anyone who has a genuine salvation and who works with fear and trembling (Phlp. 2:12) at maintaining their direct relationship with Him who is their Savior is comforted by and confirmed in *Him* and has no need for an independent doctrine to excuse and justify a life of self and carnality. When we further recognize that the last days are characterized by a “great falling away” (Mt. 24:10, 2 Ths. 2:3), we come to realize that “eternal security” (as a doctrine) provides great “job security” for them because it simultaneously comforts the passive masses at their feet in their apostasy.

Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow *Me*.” (Jn. 10:27 – emphasis added) He did not say, “...and they follow a doctrine concocted from My words” nor even “...and they follow My teachings.” Certainly, there is a place for the teachings of Christ. Jesus said elsewhere, “If you abide in My word [doctrines, teachings], you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (Jn. 8:31-32) Indeed, if we would know the liberty that attends life in the Spirit of truth (2 Cor. 3:17), we must abide in Christ’s teachings – but remaining in His teachings only means that we are genuinely His disciple. This means that we must *follow Him* wherever He leads us. We cannot follow a doctrine – we must follow the Head who will cause our lives to comply with and conform to the teachings and likeness of Him whom we follow.

When we follow a doctrine, we abandon the Master. We will likewise distance ourselves from others who don’t share our doctrine because it exposes the fact that we ourselves, in

lawlessness (doing what is right in our own eyes), are the true master we follow and obey. *We* decide which doctrines we approve of and which ones make us feel good about our religious attitudes and activities. The “eternal security” doctrine is a most comforting doctrine indeed because one we have *it* we need no longer rely on and interact with *Him*. We have a *creed* that we can write down and hold in our hot little hands and memorize and pull out to ponder our promised benefits – and we no longer need to diligently seek out that invisible and untouchable God. We need no longer traffic in that archaic concept of the fear of God (Lk. 12:5) nor do we need to think of God as a consuming fire. (Heb. 12:29) All that is behind or beneath us.

Yes, “eternal security” is a most comforting doctrine – until we learn the truth that “once saved, always saved” and “eternal security” are demonically-contrived distortions and dilutions of the rightly divided, whole counsel of God’s truth – deceptions designed to lure, if possible, the genuinely saved into negligence and laziness in regard to their salvation and to comfort and condone the religious wannabes in their carnal and lawless attitudes and lifestyles.

A most disturbing doctrine indeed.

Let he who has ears hear.

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