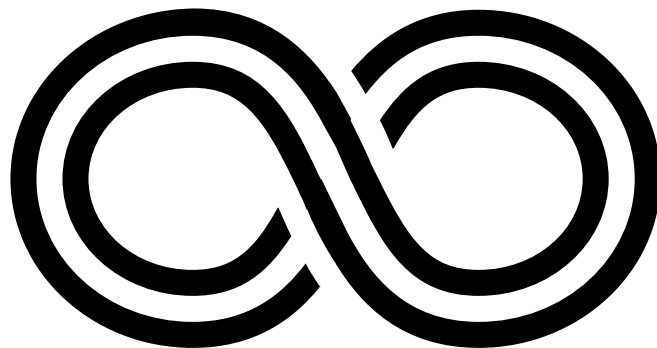




ETERNAL SECURITY

A GFC DISTINCTIVE



ETERNAL SECURITY IS THE DOCTRINE THAT BELIEVERS HAVE BEEN SAVED BY CHRIST AND CANNOT LOSE THEIR SALVATION. NOTHING CAN ALTER OUR REDEMPTION IN CHRIST. WE BELIEVE IN THIS DOCTRINE FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:



1. THE BIBLE TEACHES IT

Numerous passages teach that a Christian cannot lose their salvation. For example, Jesus says in John 10:27-28: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand."

Using a very familiar image in Israel, Jesus says that He is like a shepherd and His people are like sheep. However, unlike a human shepherd who is prone to lose or misplace his animals, Jesus loses none who belong to Him. He knows them by name and, therefore, no one will ever snatch them out of His hand. He gives them eternal life and He ensures that they will have it forever.

Romans 8:38-39 also tells us that: "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Now the idea of eternal security is presented from another angle. Whereas before, Jesus said that no one can snatch us out of His hand, here the passage tells us what that looks like practically. It states that nothing anywhere in all of creation can separate us from the love of God.

In fact, the author used the word "nor" nine times to emphasise that nothing in all of creation or in Heaven itself will ever come between us and Christ. Other passages that teach this doctrine are John 3:16; 6:39; 17:11; Romans 11:29; Ephesians 4:30; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 6:18-20; 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24.

2. THE NATURE OF GOD DEMANDS IT

Not only do numerous passages of the Bible teach about eternal security in Christ, but it can also be seen in the character of God. Since our salvation is based on God and originates with Him, then it must reflect Who He is. It has to be patterned after His character and we can learn more about it by studying Him.

For example, God is immutable which means that He never changes. Whenever He makes a decision, it is final so that He does not need to change His mind or alter His plans. God is also true and He never lies. He never goes back on His Word and, if He says that we are saved, then we are saved. It is a fixed thing in His eyes.

God is infinite which means that He is never-ending and, consequently, anything that He gives us concerning salvation must be the same way. Eternal life is eternal because it flows from Him. Everlasting life is everlasting because He Himself is everlasting.

Finally, God is sovereign which means that He is in control of everything. This world cannot threaten our salvation in any way because God rules over it. He governs it with a mighty hand as one author writes: "Sine God is God, who dare challenge His prerogative?"

3. WE COULD NOT BE SAVED WITHOUT IT

Not only does the Bible teach it and the nature of God demand it, but we could not be saved without this doctrine. We would be lost if our salvation depended on us and not on Him. Romans 3:12 says, "There is none who does good; there is not even one." This does not mean that we cannot do anything good on our own but that we cannot do anything good enough for God. Our good deeds always fall short of the mark.

Isaiah 64:6 also says, "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment." The word "filthy" here means ceremoniously filthy or ritually filthy. It means that our righteous deeds stink in the eyes of God. They are repulsive to Him because they are covered in sin and, therefore, they could never save us. They could never keep us secure in Christ.

To drive the point home, Romans 9:16 puts it another way: "So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy." Our salvation is not based on what we do. It is not based on our willingness or our actions but, instead, it is based on His mercy. His mercy saves us from start to finish.

4. WE WOULD HAVE NO ASSURANCE WITHOUT IT

Finally, one more reason we believe in eternal security is because we would have no assurance without it. We would have no guarantee that we are actually going to Heaven.

When the Christian scientist Michael Faraday was dying, several journalists asked him about his speculations concerning the after-life. To these questions he replied, "I know nothing about speculations; I am resting on certainties." We all should have the same approach with God. Our hope for eternity should be based on certainties and not speculations - certainties the Bible says that we can have.

1 John 5:13 says, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life." God wants you to know that you have eternal life. He wants you to be sure that you possess it.

Ephesians 3:11-12 also says, "This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him." This means that God does not want our faith to be a guessing game. He does not want us to come to Him with assumptions and doubts, unsure if we are actually His. He wants us to be bold and confident in our faith.

CONCLUSION

Christians can trust the doctrine of eternal security. They can know for certain that they will not lose their salvation because it is promised in the Bible and it is a part of God's character. We would also never be saved without this doctrine or enjoy the blessings of assurance which is why we have chosen this as a distinctive for our church.

This topic, more than any other, brings peace and joy to the Christian life. It gives us great comfort to know that we are safe in the arms of God. If you would like to know more about eternal security or anything else in this pamphlet, we would love to hear from you.

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