

**Xenos Christian Fellowship
Christian Principles Unit 1
Foundations of Spiritual Growth**

Week 5: Soteriology-The Security of Our Salvation

Introduction

Several questions arise in connection with the doctrine of substitutionary atonement:

- Once I've made a decision for Christ, can I lose my salvation?
- Do I receive my salvation via a process--or all at once?
- Is salvation earned (or kept) by good works or observing rituals?
- Can I forfeit my salvation through sin?
- Could someone say they have received Christ and not grow spiritually?
- What about people who claim they received Christ, but no longer believe in Christ?
- How should I respond to those who reject the doctrine of eternal security?

The Basis of Eternal Security

TERM	PASSAGES	ILLUSTRATION	MEANING	RESULT
JUSTIFICATION	Rom. 3:24 Rom. 5:1	Law Court	Acquittal; declared innocent	
REDEMPTION	Rom. 3:24 Gal. 3:13	Bondage in Egypt; Slave Market	Delivered by payment of ransom	
PROPITIATION	Rom. 3:25 1 Jn. 2:2; 4:10	Temple	Satisfaction of divine wrath	
RECONCILIATION	Rom. 5:10 2 Cor. 5:18-21	Human Relationships	Restored intimacy by resolving the cause	

Eternal Security Passages

1 Pet. 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, (5) who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Rom. 8:1*,31-39 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus . . . (31) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? (32) He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? (33) Who will

bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; (34) who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. (35) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (36) Just as it is written, "FOR THY SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED." (37) But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. (38) For I am convinced that neither death, (39) nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 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.

"The King James scholars in 1611 had to use printed editions of the Greek NT that rested upon the late Greek manuscripts, none of which was older than the 10th or 11th century. Translators today use editions of the Greek NT that rest upon manuscript evidence from the third and fourth centuries."¹

Jn. 10:27-30** My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; (28) and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. (29) My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. (30) I and the Father are one.

"Verse 28 is especially emphatic . . . In the clause `and they shall never perish,' John uses the double negative "oo mā" with the aorist subjunctive, which is a very emphatic way of declaring that something will not happen in the future. Jesus is categorically excluding the slightest chance of an apostasy by his sheep. A literal translation would be something like `They shall not, repeat, shall not, ever perish in the slightest.' . . . All in all, this passage is as definite a rejection of the idea that the true believer can fall away as could be given."²

Eph. 1:13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance . . .

Eph. 4:30* And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

¹ Bruce Metzger, *The New Testament: Its Background, Growth, and Content* (2nd ed., Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), p. 286.

² Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987), p. 1010.

- **How we discern the validity of professions of faith.**

Four Biblically Objectionable Views

1: Radical Arminianism

2 Versions of Non-Eternal Security:

- **Rejecting Christ**
- **Losing Salvation By Moral Lapses *or* Failure To Mature**

"Wesleyanism . . . finds the doctrine of sanctification not only biblical and practical but also essential to salvation . . . The responsibility for continued obedience is binding on the Christian. The gospel requires much more than the 'acceptance' of Christ as a Personal Savior . . . The whole Bible, and particularly the New Testament, gives repeated counsel and command to the believer to take very positive steps toward moral recovery. These requirements are absolute. They are things the believer *must* do . . . Eternal destiny, not merely rewards, is at stake. God's forgiveness does not exhaust the obligations of the gospel; it begins the life of obligation."⁴

Heb. 6:4-6 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, (5) and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, (6) and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame.

Heb. 10:26-31 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, (27) but a certain terrifying expectation of judgment, and THE FURY OF A FIRE WHICH WILL CONSUME THE ADVERSARIES. (28) Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. (29) How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? (30) For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE." (31) It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

⁴ Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, *Foundations of Wesleyan-Arminian Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1967), pp. 122,124.

Gal. 5:4 You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

Col. 1:21-23a And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, (22) yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—(23) if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard . . .

2 Tim. 2:12 If we deny Him, He also will deny us . . .

2: Roman Catholic Soteriology

- **The Roman Catholic church relies on two sources of authority for doctrine: the Bible and church tradition which includes papal teaching and edicts of Roman Catholic church councils.**

"Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the Word of God committed to the Church . . . the task of authentically interpreting the Word of God, whether written or handed on, has been entrusted exclusively to the living teaching office of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ . . . It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, sacred Scripture and the teaching authority of the Church, are in accord with God's most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls."⁵

Sola Scriptura:

- **Catholic canon law teaches that saving grace, while purchased only by Christ's work on the cross, is conferred in an ongoing way through the sacraments which must be officiated by the ordained priesthood.**

⁵ Second Vatican Council, "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation," no. 10.

"The Church affirms that for believers, the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation."⁶

"The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine grace is dispensed to us."⁷

The key sacraments that confer saving grace are baptism (through which original sin and all personal sins are forgiven⁸), confirmation (through which one receives the Holy Spirit⁹), confession & penance (through which mortal sins are confessed to and absolved by the priest through prescribed prayers, etc.¹⁰), and the Eucharist (which is "offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead"¹¹).

In Catholicism, therefore, one can never be sure of God's full and final acceptance in this life.

"Church teaching is that I don't know, at any given moment, what my eternal future will be. I can hope, pray, do my very best—but I still don't know. Pope John Paul II doesn't absolutely know that he will go to heaven, nor does Mother Theresa of Calcutta . . ."¹²

Sola Fide:

- **Roman Catholic soteriology is wrong in three important areas.**
 1. Sacramentalism
 2. Special caste of priests
 3. Old Testament ritualism

⁶ Cf. Council of Trent (1547): DS 1604. Reaffirmed in *Catechism of the Catholic Church* [Ligouri, Mo.: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994], p. 292.

⁷ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Ligouri, Mo.: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994), p. 293.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 324,325.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 356.

¹² Cardinal O'Connor, *The New York Times*, February 1, 1990, p. B4.

IMPORTANT QUALIFICATION:**PRACTICAL ADVICE:****3: Water Baptism**

Many people and denominations teach that water baptism is necessary for salvation. Passages such as Acts 2:38, Mark 16:16, 1 Peter 3:21, Romans 6:3,4 and Col. 2:12 are cited to support teach this position. However, **the following points refute this view.**

- **Many passages clearly teach that salvation is by grace through faith alone** (Eph. 2:8,9; Gal. 2:16; Acts 16:30,31; Jn 1:12; Titus 3:5).

- **Passages used to support this teaching can be harmonized to the “salvation by faith alone” position described above.**

Acts 2:38

Mark 16:16

1 Pet. 3:21

Rom. 6:3,4; Col. 2:12

- **Consider also these passages:**
Acts 10:47

1 Cor. 1:17

Is water baptism required?

4: Lordship Theology

Lordship theologians affirm eternal security, but they define saving faith in a way that requires complete commitment to Christ and denies the possibility of carnal Christians.

" . . . eternal life is indeed a free gift. . . that does not mean there is no cost in terms of salvation's impact on the sinner's life. This paradox may be difficult but it is nevertheless true: salvation is both free and costly . . . It (saving faith) is an exchange of all that we are for all that Christ is. And it denotes implicit obedience, full surrender to the lordship of Christ. Nothing less can qualify as saving faith . . . This is the kind of totally committed response the Lord Jesus called for. A desire to follow him at any cost. Absolute surrender. A full exchange of self for the Savior. It is the only response that will open the gates of the kingdom."¹³

"(Saving faith) retains no privileges. It clings to no cherished sins, no treasured possessions, no secret self-indulgences. It is unconditional surrender, a willingness to do anything the Lord demands."¹⁴

"It comes to this, that unless my life is a righteous life, I must be very careful before I claim that I am covered by the grace of God in Jesus Christ . . . Some of the most vital questions that I be asked, then, are these. Do you know God? Do you love God? Can you say honestly that the biggest and first thing in your life is to glorify Him and that you so want to do this that you do not care what it may cost you in any sense? . . . Let every man examine himself."¹⁵

Note:

¹³ John F. MacArthur, *The Gospel According To Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), pp. 140,141.

¹⁴ John F. MacArthur, *The Gospel According To Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), pp. 139,140.

¹⁵ D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), pp. 208,209.

Memory Verses

Rom. 8:1* - Christians will never be condemned by God.

Eph. 4:30* - Christians are sealed by God for safe passage to heaven.

Jn. 10:27-30** - Jesus will not allow anyone to snatch believers out of his hand.

Assignment

Read the two sets of passages below. How do these two sets appear to differ on role of human choice in salvation? Since the Bible does not contradict itself, how would you reconcile these two sets of passages?

Set 1: Jn. 6:35; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9; Lk. 7:30; Mt. 23:37

Set 2: Jn. 6:44,65; Acts 13:48; Rom. 9:14-18; 1 Pet. 2:8; Jude 1:4