

Blessed Assurance Eternal Security

Introduction

Good morning – Welcome

Pastor Jeff – Assim. Pastor - Filling in, Pastor Rick away & resting. Absolutely best sermon I've ever preached – should feel free to take his family on other trips...

Continuing Blessed assurance – understanding eternal security or the perseverance of the saints.

The Story Begins

But first my story. Poster boy for selection #1 on or survey sheet.

Non-churched home, 13 years old, associational summer camp – girls & sports. Minding my own business when God showed up. Severe heartfelt conviction – blubbing fool, went forward came back later with a card filled out and a booklet/tract.

Have never remembered what happened. Maybe led thru scriptures but doubted it seriously. Never really followed up – moments of God showing up in big ways but sporadic at best. But always, always doubted my salvation.

Not until age 23, post Navy, Moss Bluff, LA, Pastor Steve Bennett, Ron Upton, Young college boy named Rick Sayger – Bailey Smith crusade – “Not sure, make sure.” Finally made sense – all those nights of praying “If I'm not saved save me” what kind of prayer of faith is that. I did not believe you could

live with assurance – could not believe one could live without doubt. From that night forward the doubts have vanished and never returned. I was baptized and began my life living for Him and helping others find what I had found.

Quest for Truth

Pastor Rick mentioned last week about our struggles (whether they are about our salvation experience or some other truth we struggle with) as being an opportunity for us. My new opportunity began almost immediately as I began to share my witness with friends and family.

My mother had grown up in the hills of the Smokey Mountains of NC. Back in the 30's and 40's one of the few churches to conquer those mountains and reach those people was the Salvation Army. It was there my mother gave her heart to God. However, the Salvation Army is an Arminian Church meaning they do not believe the Bible teaches eternal security, preservation of the saints or once saved always saved.

But my new found relationship with God had awoken a hunger in me to know the truth. I had some dilemma on my hands here. I mean there was not much in life that mom wasn't right about which had been proven many, many times. But the church that I loved, the pastors that were teaching me so many wonderful things about God were certain that salvation was for eternity. I had to know the truth. It was here in my struggle that I learn a love for the Word of God.

What Does the Bible Say?

Eternal Life / Everlasting Life

First roadblock was the fact that it's called “Eternal Life” and “Everlasting Life.” 54 times. Oh my gosh can you imagine how annoying it would be if I repeated something to you 54

times. But how many times have you repeated certain messages to your children to keep them safe.

Jn 5:24 “I tell you the truth; those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.” (John 5:24, NLT)

“For it is my Father’s will that all who see his Son and believe in him should have eternal life. I will raise them up at the last day.” (John 6:40, NLT)

“And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life.” (Matthew 25:46, NLT)

“I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.” (John 5:24, NLT)

“But anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise that person at the last day.” (John 6:54, NLT)

“...have eternal life...” (John 5:24, NLT)

““...will not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16, NLT)

“...has eternal life.” (John 3:36, NLT)

“...giving them eternal life.”” (John 4:14, NLT)

“...anyone who believes has eternal life.” (John 6:47, NLT)

“I give them eternal life...” (John 10:28, NLT)

“...his commands lead to eternal life...” (John 12:50, NLT)

“...the way to have eternal life...” (John 17:3, NLT)

“...resulting in eternal life...” (Romans 5:21, NLT)

“...the free gift of God is eternal life...” (Rom 6:23, NLT)

“...will harvest everlasting life ...” (Galatians 6:8, NLT)

“...and receive eternal life.” (1 Timothy 1:16, NLT)

“...they have eternal life...” (Titus 1:2, NLT)

“...we will inherit eternal life.” (Titus 3:7, NLT)

“...we enjoy the eternal life ...” (1 John 2:25, NLT)

“He has given us eternal life...” (1 John 5:11, NLT)

“...you may know you have eternal life.” (1 Jn 5:13, NLT)

“...who will bring you eternal life...” (Jude 21, NLT)

Qualified Truth

But what does that mean? Yes, it’s eternal life “IF”.....

It is the human side of s that tries so desperately to muddy up the waters. God’s Word clear – He saves us forever...End of argument.

One of the verses that cleared this up for me more than any other was... John 10:25-30

“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.” (John 10:28–29, NKJV).

The text takes the Hebrews back to their favorite motif – the shepherd! He has them securely in his hand. What could take them out? NO NOTHING! Double negative – bad English Great Greek.

Nothing conquers Christ – laid down His life – Wait MORE we are all in the Father’s hand!

No Nothing includes you! Brings rest, assurance, peace. Can’t fall out, can willingly crawl out, can’t be snatched out by some enemy, Can’t be thrown out by others. I am saved forever. Knowing I could never leave.

But wait, I joined – I can unjoin. Right?

Bought & Paid for!

Not actually

“For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (1 Corinthians 6:20, NKJV)

Technically speaking we did not join, we were purchased. Sin owned us and Jesus paid the ultimate price for us – His precious life. Now I ask – how can you repay that debt?

You see how freeing that is? I don’t have to fear my weakness, my confusion, my distractions...

Final Evidence

“Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

And this we will do if God permits. 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.” (Heb 6:1–6, NKJV)

In my personal struggle, this passage was the final nail in the coffin. Funny, for a lot of people this is the passage that causes confusion and doubt. It is a hard passage but for me it brought a moment of clarity and understanding.

It was lunchtime, in LA, in the early 1980’s, I was sitting in the front seat of my 1970 Ford F100 short bed pick up with a 390 cubic inch engine with a four barrel carburetor – OK I get a little distracted sometime – but it was one hot truck – that thing would turn sideways in the road anytime you hit it hard. You men know what I sayin & and some of you women... I’m sitting in the cab eating a sandwich and reading Heb 6 in my Gideon NT – thanks Gideons for giving me that NT when I joined the Navy.

And it hits me – what He’s telling us there. He’s not saying you CAN lose your salvation. He’s saying you CAN’T and even if you could (but you CAN’T) you could never be saved again! It’s yet more evidence of why you can’t be lost again.

Look at it with me. He’s telling us we must move on from the most basic truth and grasp more mature truths. We can’t spend all out time just reminding you again and again that you can’t lose your salvation. Stop listening to those people. Good tip! Been there.

Because, IF a person who has been truly saved (full description here) were able to fall away (snatch themselves out of the un snatchable hand), they would be doomed for ever; because it is impossible to save that person again. Where will

you get a new sacrifice? There is only one Jesus, the perfect son of God who died in your place. All the sacrifices of the past, all the lambs and bulls and pigeons and doves whose blood was shed were just symbolic of the perfect Lamb of God that was to come. And there is no other – He is the only begotten son of God. There is no one else to sacrifice.

What about those who do leave?

We have all heard stories or know of people who seem to have walked away. They presented what seemed to evidence that they know God and was walking with Him. Then something happened: a tragedy, a revisiting of an old habitual sin, some new disastrous habit invades their life and they leave – never to return again.

(falls under the hard sayings of the scripture – some parts hard to understand – writing a letter to be read by infants and mature grown adults as well).

What happened to them? Did discipline and hardship and pain and difficulty suddenly surround them. Did God, their loving father, spank them and correct them and do everything in His power to drive them back to a loving relationship.

Parent – what lengths would you go to return an erring child to your home and fellowship? An example found in 1Cor 5 of a man in an incestuous relationship in the church was being ignored by the church. Paul directed otherwise.

“For my part, even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. As one who is present with you in this way, I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. So when you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 5:3–5, NIV)

It appears God removed His protection that He affords all believers and allowed Satan freedom to attack in the man’s life. And God would have allowed the ending of his life in order to “Save his spirit on the day of the Lord” or when the Lord returns. Notice this once again points to eternal security – Satan could kill the body but could never take the spirit of one who is truly saved.

However in this situation, evidence is presented in the next book 2Cor 2:8 that the man overcome with sorrow, repented and ended the incestuous relationship.

But it does show that God would literally take you out rather than allow you to drag your testimony and His through the mud and hurt the church. It is a hard saying.

But we also have the contrast to that. Those who walk away and seem to happily walk away. No disasters, no destruction – other than the destruction their sin creates. What of them?

“They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.” (1 John 2:19, NIV)

If you think about it, it makes sense. God is certainly able to hold what is His. If they are able to walk away and keep walking, it was never real in their lives. They may have been close, they may have really had a desire to be a child of God – but something held them back; something stopped them from truly committing their hearts to God.

It is another of the hard sayings in the Bible. I may not understand it completely; I will never know for sure who is and who is not a real child of God. But I know God and know that I can trust Him.

Peace of Mind & Heart

Do you see the peace of mind and peace of heart that knowing that I am saved and saved forever brings?

I will close with this - Last week, Pastor Rick 1Pet 2:5-7

“Because you have these blessings, do your best to add these things to your lives: to your faith, add goodness; and to your goodness, add knowledge; and to your knowledge, add self-control; and to your self-control, add patience; and to your patience, add service for God; and to your service for God, add kindness for your brothers and sisters in Christ; and to this kindness, add love.” (2 Peter 1:5–7, NCV)

This morning we saw how God has added Patience or endurance as some translations put it. We can and will endure to the end. I can rest in that fact. God will not give up on me, will not throw me back will not reject me in the end. I and rest from that battle and move forward to fight the other battles God has for me...like service and kindness and love.