

1st PETER BIBLE STUDY

1 Peter 1:05

Lesson #3

Introduction

Salvation - Protected By The Power of God

From the earliest days of the church, and even before the church, the common question among mankind has been that question regarding our eternal outcome. In Luke Chapter 18 a rich young man described as a ruler among his people comes running up to Jesus and asks him “good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” On the day of Pentecost when the apostle Peter began to preach concerning Jesus, and told the Jews that they had just crucified the son of God who was their long awaited Messiah, they cried out “what shall we do?” And then in Acts chapter 16, when Paul and Silas had been put into a Philippian jail, and an earthquake shook off their shackles, the jailer cried out to Paul “what must I do to be saved?”

These are just a few of the examples dealt with in Scriptures, but the question is universal and timeless. Indeed, “*what must I do to be saved,*” is a question eventually asked by virtually everyone whose ever lived, at some point in their life. And the magnitude and diversity of answers that mankind has devised to this question are too numerous to count.

However, it is how one comes to understand the answer to this initial question, that ultimately determines virtually everything that they subsequently come to believe regarding how one maintains that salvation, and whether one might be capable of losing it again. The nature of salvation itself, and the means by which it is initially attained, and the operative forces involved in it, have everything to do with one’s perception of the eternal and inevitable security of such a salvation. Therefore, let me start with some basic groundwork regarding both the means, and the nature, of this mysterious thing we call salvation, as it is presented and described in the holy scriptures.

(1) **The Means of Salvation:**

Either this thing that we call salvation is a cooperative effort between multiple parties, which we call synergistic, or, it is entirely the work of a single entity which we call monergistic. I’ve used these terms because an understanding of them makes a discussion of our topic much easier.

First let me discuss the term synergism. This is the idea that salvation is a cooperative work in which man supplies an ingredient that we call faith, and God supplies an ingredient that we call Grace. The combination of these two ingredients, when properly mixed together are perceived to result in genuine salvation. Neither party supplies everything on their own, but each party brings that which they have the capability of producing by themselves. Man is said to have sufficient faith within himself that if he will just “willingly believe” then God will supply the necessary grace for salvation.

Usually some visible or tangible act is attached to this “willing belief.” For instance, if one will walk to the front of the church after a sermon and make a “public profession of faith” then that is considered sufficient proof that this person has provided the necessary ingredient on their part; and God is eager, and even obligated, to provide the necessary grace for salvation as His part. This belief is by far the most popular understanding in present day Evangelicalism. Denominations have based their whole mission statement and purpose on this understanding. And why not, it certainly makes perfect sense, it sure seems fair and just, it allows man to do his part of the job, and then let’s God finish the work that man isn’t able to do. When all is said and done each party can shake hands and congratulate each other on what a fine effort they both put forth to achieve this marvelous result. God and man, working together, to do what neither can do by themselves; what a magnificent theme, what a great partnership this is. Who wouldn’t love it? Who doesn’t want to partner up with God, and have Him working on their team? But the question is - is this perception biblically accurate?

Now let's examine the alternate point of view, monergism. In this point of view, man is perceived as dead in his sins, and completely impotent as to providing anything whatsoever of his own doing that will afford him salvation. From this point of view, man neither has, nor is capable of producing, by his own unaided free will, anything that is an essential component of salvation. From this point of view, God provides as a gift, the very faith itself, the "willing belief", as a gift of grace. From this point of view, the "faith" exercised by man wasn't something that he had within himself, and then freely decided to use, but was something that he didn't have within himself, so God gave it to him as a gift by grace. This doesn't nullify man's willing exercise of that faith once received, it simply defines the source from which it came in the first place. While less popular during this century amongst the contemporary churches, this belief has been historically accepted as the most biblically accurate, and formed a part of the foundational principles of the protestant reformation.

If we examine the two points of view, there are some obviously unavoidable disparities which will arise between the two. The synergistic point of view puts God and man in a partnership, with each supplying what the other cannot or will not provide. When finished, each may take pride in having done their part. There is an attitude of semi-equality, though admittedly out of balance in God's favor, and not one of utter dependence by one party upon the other.

On the other hand, the monergistic point of view is one that leaves God as absolutely sovereign, and merciful, and gracious; and men as totally and hopelessly dependent upon God for His grace. There is no attitude of mutual equality, and absolutely no pride for having done a crucial part of the work oneself. In this point of view, God alone gets all the glory, and all the honor, and man is utterly and totally humbled before Him, with absolutely no grounds whatsoever for boasting in himself. (Eph 2:8-9) And thus we have the two perspectives on means. Now let's take a brief look at point two:

(2) The Nature of Salvation:

In addition to the means by which salvation is attained, there is also diversity in the perception of its very nature as well. To some, it is essentially a forensic declaration. A verdict of "not guilty" issued by divine decree, as a jury might declare a defendant. It is thought to have no connection whatsoever with the essential character, nature, and composition of the recipient. To these, salvation means they have been declared, by decree, to be free from punishment for any crimes they may have committed, through the crucifixion of Christ, and are now free to pursue their lives as they wish because Jesus paid all their debts for them. To these, there is absolutely nothing internal, nor life changing, about being saved. Salvation is an entirely external declaration, or decree of acquittal.

However, to others, salvation is perceived to be far more than a forensic declaration. It is described in the Bible with terms like regeneration, born again, newness of life, transformation. These are terms which describe a very significant change in the very constitution of the saved individual. Regeneration implies far more than a mere external declaration. It describes a change in that individual's mental, spiritual, moral, and behavioral perceptions which affects every facet of their life, both internally and externally. And, unlike a simple decree, this rebirth, this regeneration, this transformation implies something that is not so easily, or even necessarily possibly lost or discarded.

Like the caterpillar that builds a cocoon and then later emerges as a butterfly, there's no going back to what it was before. Whatever happened in that cocoon was a one way process, and the entire nature and appearance is entirely different. Regeneration of the children of God is very similar. Once he was one thing, but afterwards, that old thing has passed away, and now he is a whole new creature. (2Cor 5:17) And like the caterpillar that becomes the butterfly, this is a one way process that involves far more than just a declaration or a name change.

So, from our discussions on first, the means of salvation, and secondly on the very nature of salvation itself, we can see that one's perception of its ultimate security would certainly be a product of their perception of what salvation actually is in the first place. If it's acquired, either in whole or in part, by something that we ourselves have done, then it wouldn't be unreasonable to perceive that we might be able to lose it again. And if it's nothing more, by its nature, than a mere forensic decree, then we might easily believe that it's possible to reverse that decree under some type of situations or circumstances.

From this foregoing discussion, we can see that it is impossible to rationally discuss the eternal security of our salvation, unless we first thoroughly understand, and agree, on exactly what our salvation is by its very nature, and, precisely how it is initially secured. Therefore, before we can go any further, it is essential that I define the standpoint of myself, as pastor of Narrow Gate Baptist Church, regarding where we stand on these issues we've discussed.

Firstly, we believe that the Bible teaches unequivocally that salvation is a monergistic work of God, performed entirely by the grace of God upon the souls of a hopeless mankind, but not apart from their willing participation. (Eph 2:8-10) By that we mean that the willing participation of man is the byproduct of the gift of faith afforded by God's grace, not the initial means by which it's secured. And God doesn't forcefully save anyone against their will, but rather acts upon their will to cause them to "willingly desire" to repent and believe God.

This is the very essence of the gift being described in Ephesians 2:8 -10. It is the gift of "willing desire" to repent and follow Jesus at any worldly cost, something so contrary to natural human tendencies that no one ever would or could do it, without God acting upon their fallen and sin damaged human will. Therefore, based on our understanding of God's gracious gift of "saving faith," we are decidedly monergistic in our interpretation of the initial means of salvation.

Secondly, we believe that salvation, by its very nature, is both a forensic decree, **and** a rebirth through regeneration of the spirit; the heart and soul of man, which makes that person a whole new creature. We believe the Bible teaches that this regeneration, this transformation of thinking, this whole new man, who is being transformed into the likeness of Christ, is the whole point **of** salvation, from God's point of view. Where this process is not evident within the life of a person, we can see no credible evidence that salvation has ever taken place.

Now, after clearly making our case, and declaring our position, we can finally begin to discuss our Bible verses tonight regarding the eternal security of true believers. We will answer the question "can one who was saved ever be lost?" And, "who" and "what" is the power that protects the salvation of God's chosen? Let's read our verses:

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

3 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.

To grasp the full gravity of the subject of this study, which is the eternal security of our salvation, it's profitable, and probably even necessary, to start the discussion at verse one. Peter opens with the declaration that we who have received this salvation were chosen for such according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, who then implemented it through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, which is described as a work which brings us into obedience to Jesus Christ. It also affords us redemption through the shedding of His blood.

Verse three goes on to say that it was God the Father, who according to His great mercy has **caused us** to be born again. It doesn't say it allowed us, nor afforded us the means, but clearly says **caused us** to be born again. I stress this because of our previously stated monergistic point of view regarding the means of salvation. He then continues to say that our rebirth is to a living hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. A living hope of what? A living hope that we have been sprinkled by His blood for forgiveness sins, and we will be resurrected to eternal life by the power that raised Christ from the dead. So our salvation can be understood as forgiveness of sins which frees us from the fear of judgment, and the hope of eternal life even if we die, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It furthermore includes a sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit which progressively brings us into obedience to Jesus Christ. And thus we have a brief but pretty accurate description of salvation.

In verse four we're told that this work performed by the Father, and through his Son, is an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, and is reserved for us in heaven. And now our verse five, which we're examining today, speaks in regard to all of this that we've just discussed.

Verse five says that all of this, is in fact, reserved in heaven for us, "*who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*" All of the foregoing is a work of God, not of man. All of the foregoing is being held as an inheritance for those who were chosen according to the foreknowledge of God. Again, all of it is entirely a work of God, none of it is a mutual partnership of efforts with mankind. Everything that Peter has described in the first four verses is a conscious decision made by God before creation, and protected by God as an inheritance for those whom He has chosen.

Starting with the first two words "*who are.*" We need to ask, who are the "*who are*" that this verse is describing. The "*who are*" that this verse is describing is that same group who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father in verses one and two. They are the elect, the children of God whose names have been recorded in the book of life since before the foundation of the world. (Eph 1:4; 1Pe 1:2; Rev 13:8, 17:8) This is not some nebulous, nondescript, undefined theoretical group that eventually emerges over time. This is a specific, predefined, and pre-chosen group that the Father has known from before creation, and Peter labors the point to make this absolutely clear.

And therefore, because this group has been known, and loved, and chosen by God, they are therefore "*protected by the power of God.*" This verse leaves no room whatsoever for doubt as to who it is who is affording the protection of the salvation of the chosen. This verse says that it is God himself who is protecting His chosen. It was not within man's power to save himself, and it is not within man's power to protect that salvation, therefore, God himself has both performed the initial work of salvation, and provides the eternal ongoing protection for it. So says the apostle Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. If salvation is to be lost, it must be wrenched away from the power of God. A mere slip, or mistake, or moment of indecisiveness on the part of man cannot put into jeopardy a salvation that is being protected by the power of God, and being held in reserve by Him in heaven. (v.4)

If man thinks that he had a part in his own salvation, then he is inclined to think that by his own actions he might put it into jeopardy, or lose it. But, if we understand that salvation was a monergistic work of God, to a predetermined and chosen group beloved by God from before creation, then we begin to see the absurdity of the thought that any man, or angel, or demon, or even the devil himself might wrench a beloved child's salvation from the powerful protecting hand of God. Let me quote some of the words of Jesus regarding this issue:

27 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will 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 ." John 10:27-30 (NASB)

These verses from the gospel of John and from 1st Peter unequivocally teach that the eternal security of man's salvation rests not with that man, but with the omnipotent power of Almighty God. These verses, if rightly understood, should forever end any and all debate on this issue of eternal security.

And I can't begin to tell you the comfort that I've personally drawn from this verse in those times when my performance has been something less than stellar. Men will fail, men will disappoint, men will fall short, but the power of God to protect the inheritance of His chosen is reserved inviolate in heaven. (v.4) Only if there is a power somewhere in the universe that is greater than God's, would it be possible for so much as one of His chosen to ever be lost. And thus we remember the words of Jesus when He said:

37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. 38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. John 6:37-39 (NASB)

What we might easily overlook in a discussion of whether salvation can be had and then lost is the implications of that thought from a divine perspective. We look at it solely from man's perspective when we ponder the question, but there is a much more significant aspect to that question. If anyone who was chosen by the foreknowledge of God, and then called and sanctified by His Holy Spirit into the number of the elect, were to then be lost again to sin and Satan, what would that, by logical necessity, imply about the power of God's protection of His chosen? What would that say about that gift of "saving faith" through which God maintains the protection of his chosen?

Do you see the problem this causes from the divine perspective. It both makes Jesus' words that He would lose none of what had been given to Him by the Father absolutely wrong, and violates the declared will of the Father for that person's eternal salvation. This makes the divine Godhead both untruthful and fallible. And if that's the case then nothing in the universe, or beyond the universe, is assured and certain and omnipotent. Therefore, the eternal security of everyone who is truthfully born again, that is, regenerated by the Spirit of God, is as secure as is the certainty of the omnipotent power of God, and the truthfulness of Jesus Christ. The verses that we just read from the gospel of John, even without all the myriad of supporting verses elsewhere, absolutely demand no other conclusion.

We cannot have **both** saved people who are then subsequently lost, **and** simultaneously an omnipotent, truthful God who is the self-declared protector of those people. The loss of even a single true believer, regardless of whether by their own actions or another's, must include with it, the loss of divine omnipotence and divine truthfulness. (Repeat)

So, we've determined that the scriptures undeniably teach that eternal security is afforded by the power of God and does not depend on man. But the verse goes on to say even more. It tells us the form of this power that God uses to protect our salvation. We remember that salvation initially came about through the gift of faith bestowed on man by the grace of God. Therefore since it is by God-given faith that man attains salvation, it is by God sustaining faith that man remains in that salvation. Peter says that we are protected by the power of God through faith. Although our natural inclination is to always think first about works, and works do authenticate genuine saving faith, nevertheless it is not by works that God protects us. This Scriptures tell us that the thing that needs to be protected by God is our faith, because it is through faith that God has chosen to save His elect. Therefore the power of God that initially invoked our salvation, is also sustained by God to protect and preserve that gift of saving faith. It is a perfect gift, and will never be allowed by God to fail. One last comment for clarification:

Although the power of God is at work, it's through the instrument of faith, and faith is an interesting thing. It isn't simply a human choice, or rational decision that's made once and then done with; it's something that is determined in the unconscious parts of our heart and mind, but, like many things, it also requires use and exercise to work most efficiently. We're told that God protects us through it, but we're entrusted to maintain the efficiency and power that it has on our daily lives by our use and care of that faith. And how do we properly maintain it? By feeding it what it requires to remain healthy and strong and effectual - the continuous word of God, and frequent prayer, and Christian fellowship.

Just because our faith is provided by God, that in no way relieves us from our responsibility of proper use and maintenance of that great gift. Just like a fine Italian sports car might be given to us as a free gift, failure on our part to properly maintain it will eventually reduce its efficiency to nothing, if we let it happen. And such is the nature of our gift of saving faith. Failure on our part to properly maintain it, will reduce its efficiency to the point that we aren't even sure that we still even have it. We must not let that happen to such valuable gift as saving faith. We are accountable before God for how we use it, for the value we put on it, and how we care for it.

Now, this brings us to the last part of our verse. Which ends with "*for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*" This gift of saving faith that was given entirely by the grace of God, and is being protected by the power of God, has a final outcome. That final outcome is the realization, and possession of salvation, with all the blessings and glories that it entails. Now one might say, "wait a minute I thought we were already saved." Well, yes in one sense we have received that gift of saving faith that assures that salvation is ours. But salvation means both being saved **for** something and saved **from** something. And both of those are still forthcoming.

Concerning the salvation **for** something, we only have a partial knowledge, but nonetheless it is quite magnificent. It involves a perfect kingdom, completely sinless, where we will live together with God our Father, and in the visible presence of his Son Jesus Christ. We will enjoy completely new tangible bodies that are incorruptible and sinless and free from all temptations. We will enjoy perfect communion with our God, who has created us for this very purpose; that we might love him, and worship him, and comprehend the magnitude of His holiness and His glory.

In first Corinthians 2:9 we're told "things that eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the hearts of men, all that God has prepared for those who love Him." This has always been one of my favorite verses. It tells me that our heavenly Father has things that He's prepared for us that we can't even comprehend until we see them firsthand. Things that probably can't even be understood in the fallen condition that we live while we inhabit these fleshly bodies.

Now I know that there are some who are perhaps a little fearful of heaven. They perceive it as being so holy and pure that perhaps they won't fit in, or worse, they won't even really enjoy it. There can be several reasons for this. The most serious reason is that perhaps they aren't really regenerated, and have no serious desire for holiness. I mean, this is a good test isn't it? Do you really want to live in a place that's absolutely sinless and holy forever and ever? My dear friend, if you don't there is something seriously and tragically wrong. At best, you are saved but your mind is set on the carnal things of this world. If this is the case you must recognize it and realize that we are called to be holy as God is holy, and holiness is a requirement for entrance into heaven.

So how do you affect a change? You must refocus your attentions. For one thing you must spend much more time in the Word of God, and with fellow Christians. One's affections for Christ, and His holiness are contingent upon our continually and repeatedly setting our minds and our attentions upon Him. We do this by the diligent study of his Word, and by setting our minds much upon the things of holiness and godliness, and rejecting worldliness in all of its forms. Every Christian must develop a deep aversion to sin, and cultivate a genuine heartfelt desire to be freed from it. It is by much and repeated contemplation on things holy that one cultivates an appreciation for holiness.

Do we actually think that if we spend the whole day thinking about nothing but the issues of this world, that at the end of that day our delights and affections will be for holiness? No, it doesn't work that way. We appreciate that which we comprehend and perceive as valuable and precious. So we must contemplate in our minds, at every opportunity, the value of righteousness and holiness, and the sweet benefits that they afford. And when we've done this, and holiness and righteousness is much on our minds, and in our affections, then there will be no fear of God's heavenly kingdom. There will be only glorious anticipation of His return, and the heartfelt cry, come quickly Lord Jesus.

The time is shorter than it has ever been, and the demands of the world upon our attention and affections have never been greater and more intense. Between television, computers, cell phones, and a myriad of entertainment devices, it is possible, even commonplace, for one to have their mind completely immersed in the world from the moment they get out of bed in the morning until they go back to bed at night. Godly affections and appreciations do not happen by themselves, and God does not force feed them upon us. Where our treasure is, is where our hearts will be also, so what do we treasure each day? Do we treasure our time in the word of God, and make time for it each and every day of our life? Do we treasure holiness and righteousness, and then conduct our lives in a manner that is consistent with them?

My dear brothers and sisters, do not let your confidence in the eternal security of your salvation cause you the eternal loss of heavenly rewards. There is a judgment seat of Christ, where at, every believer will give an account of our life to the Lord Jesus Christ, and be justly and rightly compensated for how we lived, and what we did in these earthly bodies. If Jesus Christ, and his righteousness and holiness is not our first love, I assure you He will know it, and we will suffer genuine loss for it.

Now, the other part of that something of salvation is the final judgment of the lake of fire for all those who have rejected Jesus Christ. In the realm of time, in which we humans reside, that judgment hasn't yet taken place. So the actual taking hold of, and possession of this salvation is yet a future event.

We are not yet in the kingdom of God. And we have not yet been spared the Great White Throne judgment of God. All of this is said to be things of the last time. But according to the holy Scriptures, the Word of God, there is going to be a time which is called the last time, or the end time, or the day of the Lord. And if you are not one of the first group that we've just discussed who are awaiting the marvelous kingdom of God, then you are awaiting the other side of the coin.

If this is the case, you are awaiting the judgment of God. And don't be misled. This is not a judgment as to whether you are or aren't guilty of something. In human terms it can be said that this is not a trial but a sentencing hearing. The trial was conducted without you. God has unilaterally declared you guilty of high crimes for which the only penalty is the lake of fire.

When you are called before that great white throne, it will not be to give evidence and testimony regarding your guilt or innocence, it will not be a time for you to try to justify your behaviors, or compare yourself to others that you perceive as worse, or even just to plead for mercy, but solely to hear an accounting of your sins and then receive your sentencing. The time for any of explanations, or excuses, or pleadings will have already passed, never to return.

While we are here in these bodies we have opportunity to repent of our behaviors. We have opportunity to confess our crimes and petition for forgiveness, but this time will eventually pass, and the window of opportunity will close forever. Those who obstinately, and arrogantly mocked the Lord Jesus will then be brought forcibly to kneel down before His throne. They will be required to openly declare that He *is* the true Son of God, that He *is* the true King of king's, and He *is* the true Lord of all lords. As they mocked and humiliated Him during their lifetimes, so will they be mocked and humiliated openly before Him, and all mankind and Angels will watch and shout Amen, Amen. The name of the Lord Jesus Christ will be vindicated and honored and glorified, even before His rejecters.

But then even worse than that, they will hear Him pronounce their judgment of eternal condemnation in that burning lake of fire. This is the end of their road. There is nowhere else after this. This is eternity, in all its horror, to those who would not accept this salvation, those who rejected the love of the truth, so that they might continue to take pleasure in their unrighteousness. (2Th 2:10-12) Let's leave no room here for mistake, or misunderstanding, the scriptures put the blame, the root cause of the rejection of Christ Jesus, firmly upon the innate desires of a person to maintain the autonomy to practice their own desires without accountability to God. And for that, the sentence is eternal perdition.

Furthermore, concerning those who did not accept this salvation of the Lord, but rather loved their sin and righteousness. It is a fact that the Lord Jesus spoke significantly more about hell than he did about heaven. Perhaps it's because so very many more go there than to heaven, or perhaps because of His great compassion for those who are lost, but it cannot be said that mankind was not repeatedly warned of the dire consequences of sin, and the rejection of the love of God that is seen in Christ Jesus. The book of Revelation closes with a universal call to all humanity, "*whosoever will let them come.*" The sad truth is, that apart from the gift of faith by the grace of God, no one ever has the "will." (Rom 3:10-18)

Conclusion:

In this lesson we've seen that salvation is attained through a singular, monergistic work of God, whereby He grants as a gift, by His grace alone, that saving faith that affords salvation. Man neither does, nor can, contribute anything whatsoever towards his own salvation, it is the gift of God, but yet he does voluntarily participate in it. However, we also discussed that just because it was a gift, that doesn't relieve us from our responsibility to properly care for that faith gift. And our care involves much and continuous feeding on the word of God, and prayer, and fellowship, or the gift will begin to degrade in its performance. Sufficient neglect will reduce it to near uselessness as far as how it affects our lives, and attitudes, and affections. If we ponder the value of this gift we will never neglect the proper care and maintenance of it.

Then we discussed the nature of this saving faith that produces salvation. We discussed that it's much more than simply a forensic decree, but rather a whole new life through regeneration. And this new regenerated life bears fruits, or evidences, that verify its authenticity. James, the brother of Jesus, wrote in his epistle that faith without corresponding works of authentication is a dead faith, not the living and saving faith that's characteristic of the gift of God.

We concluded that the scriptures undeniably teach that this salvation, that is attained as a gift of God, is then protected by the power of God, not man, and is reserved imperishable, undefiled, and unfadingly for us in heaven. We read some verses from John, chapters six and ten, where Jesus stated emphatically that He would not lose so much as one of those that his Father has given to Him; because, it was His Father's will that He not do so; and that no one was able to snatch a single one from His Father's hand.

These statements mean that no one who has been chosen by the foreknowledge of God, and regenerated by His Spirit, can ever be lost again without resultantly making Jesus' statement of compliance to his Father's wishes false, and God the Father's claims of omnipotence less than truthful. The eternal security of every believer, without exception, is directly tied, by a multitude of scriptures, to the omnipotence of God's power and the truthfulness of Jesus Christ. They remain forever inseparable.

Every discussion as to whether salvation may or may not be something that is lost, surrendered voluntarily, revoked by some decree, blotted out from the book of life, or cancelled by some heinous sin, must be set against the backdrop of what salvation actually is. It is a regeneration of the human spirit by an act of God, through the gift of saving faith, and He says emphatically that He will not lose a single one, and, that there is none who is able to snatch them from His hand. There is no denying that these words are recorded in the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, any discussion of the security of salvation is, in its essence, not a discussion about the abilities or inabilities of man, but about the power and integrity of the word of God.

And this is what I want us to come away with from this study. With a clear and lasting and unshakeable understanding of just exactly what are the full ramifications of a discussion of eternal security of believers. It's not a discussion about humans and their capabilities, it's all about the integrity of the word of God, and His power and truthfulness to adhere to it. Once we understand this, we will never be misled or shaken in our faith by clever manipulations or misuses of scriptures, or by speculative human reasonings. This verse, especially when connected with those from the gospel of John, make a permanent and irreversible end to any and all discussions of the eternal security of God's gift of salvation through the gift of saving faith. It cannot be lost or reversed - period, end of discussion.

And finally, both the benefits of this salvation, and the consequences for the lack of it, are ready to be revealed in heaven when the time is right. And such is the sovereignty of Almighty God, who declares the end of things from the very beginning, and always accomplishes all His good pleasure. (Isa 46:8-10) To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

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04/11/10