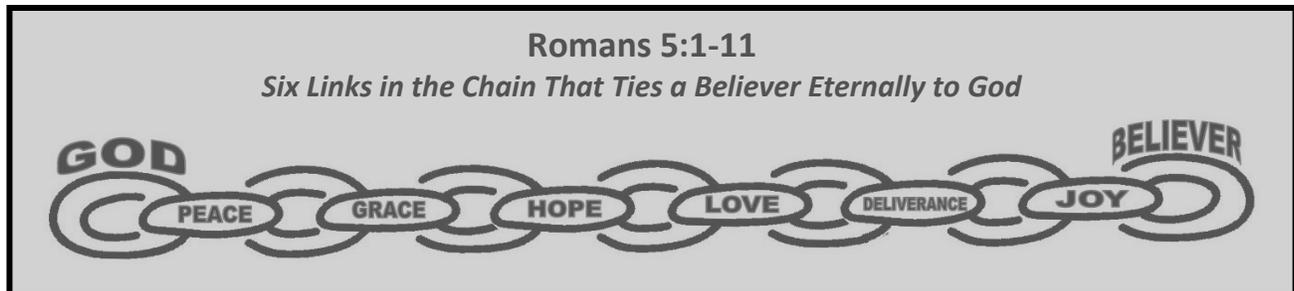


Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, February 8, 2017 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

SAVED WITHOUT A DOUBT
“Digging Deeper Into the Doctrine of Eternal Security”
The Unbreakable Chain of Eternal Security –Loved Everlasting
Romans 5:1-11, Various Scripture



“The Eternal Security of the Believer” may be defined this way:

“Eternal security is the work of God that guarantees that the gift of salvation, once received is forever and cannot be lost.”

There are three (3) important parts to that definition that are important to understand:

3 Important Parts to the Definition:

- (1) **Salvation is the work of God (Ephesians 2:8-9)** – **“⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.”**
- (2) **Salvation is a gift (Romans 6:23)** – **“²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**
- (3) **Salvation is forever and cannot be lost (John 10:27-29)** – **“²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone 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 My Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one.”**

Unfortunately, the teaching of eternal security is sometimes a source of problems within Christian circles. Some Christians believe that if you hold to eternal security, you are purposely promoting a license to sin. On the other hand, some Christians believe that if you don't believe in eternal security, you have to keep your salvation by works.

2 Areas of Disagreement Among Christian Over Eternal Security:

- (1) **License to sin** – Some Christians believe that if you hold to eternal security, you are purposely promoting a license to sin.
- *Does this idea have any merit in the discussion? Why or why not?*
 - *How may the teaching of eternal security promote a license to sin?*
 - *Do you agree or disagree with those who may contend that if you hold to eternal security, you are purposely promoting a license to sin? Why or why not?*
- (2) **Salvation by works** – Some Christians believe that if you don't believe in eternal security, you are promoting a salvation by works by saying you have to keep yourself saved by what you do.
- *Does this idea have any merit in the discussion? Why or why not?*
 - *How may the teaching that one could lose his or her salvation promote the idea that salvation is by works?*
 - *Do you agree or disagree with those who may contend that if you hold to hold to the possibility of losing one's salvation you are promoting salvation by works? Why or why not?*

****Observation: Both sides often misrepresent the other; and instead of being gracious on this debatable issue (as we are commanded to be in Romans 14:1-12), people accuse each other of being unbiblical. It is my position (based on my own study and interpretation of scripture) that once a person is saved, he cannot lose his salvation. I place my conviction on this position because of my personal study and interpretation of Scripture; but I do not claim to be the final or even the best authority on the subject and have arrived at my understanding of scripture based on the backbone of much Biblical scholarship and theological work done by others on the subject... and I do not claim that that some may have studied the same passages and arrived at a different position than I. I recognize that there are godly people on both sides of the argument. Nevertheless, I must be true to my personal convictions and understanding of scripture; that once a person is genuinely saved, it is forever and cannot be lost, and that God will not revoke His promised salvation on the life of a believer.***

However, the reality is that many people lack a sense of security in their salvation or an assurance of salvation either stated or unstated. Some may suffer on in silence never having the real peace of mind that their salvation is secure. Some may experience intermittent bouts of doubt and fear about their salvation. It is important for a genuine believer to have assurance of his or her salvation for a number of reasons, but primarily because they cannot grow in their faith and commitment Christ if they remain at the beginning point of salvation and are never sure themselves that they are saved. Nevertheless, there are many causes and reasons that could lay behind a lack of assurance or have security in their salvation experience, many of which are easily answered and addressed in Scripture. When a person doubts his or her salvation there can be several contributing factors. Just for review let's look together at 5 of these reasons that we have previously discussed.

5 Primary Reasons Why People Lack Assurance:

1. **Doubting the reality of one's commitment to Christ** – Some doubt the reality of their commitment to Christ. Sometimes when a person cannot see visible or tangible evidence of their commitment to Christ and Christian ideals/practices/behavior it causes them to doubt

and lack assurance. They may question, “Did I really mean it when I prayed?” Maybe my heart wasn’t sincere enough?”

2. **Questioning the correctness of the salvation process** – Some question the correctness of the procedure they went through when they were saved... can’t pin-point a specific time and place, didn’t say those “exact” words in the sinners prayer, didn’t do it right the first time, wasn’t at a church, wasn’t with a minister, etc.
3. **Lack of Biblical teaching and grounding** – Often when one is struggling with doubts and a lack of assurance is may simply be a learning/grounding problem. A lack of Scriptural grounding and learning on the foundational and doctrinal understanding of “salvation” and particularly “the eternal security of the believer” Those who don’t believe in eternal security will naturally lack assurance... how can they ever know. Those who attach works to salvation will naturally doubt. Why? Because a lack of grounding on the basic Biblical teaching on such things as salvation, and doctrines such as “the eternal security of the believer” cause us to just not “know” for sure. We’ve never studies it and been convinced of it.
4. **Unconfessed or unrepentant sin** – Sin in a believer-s life will always lead to doubt if it remains unconfessed and unrepented of. You can be sure that Satan, the enemy, will jump on our failings to point the finger and cause us to question the validity of our salvation.
5. **Lack of salvation or lostness** – For that one who is having doubts or lack of assurance of their salvation they should always check it out and be sure that they are indeed saved. Some have reason to doubt because they are lost. Sometimes it is not a lack of assurance or doubting your salvation, but the conviction of the Holy Spirit that they were never saved, and are in fact lost.

Now, we have been studying the Apostle Paul’s words in Romans 5:1-11, where he lays the ground work for the “eternal tie” that believers have with God through Jesus Christ and His work on our behalf in securing our eternal salvation. In Romans 5:1-11, Paul lays out for us in succinct fashion, link by link, the chain that ties eternal to God... securely linking our lives to Him. And, again, it is all based on what Jesus has done on our behalf and given to us. Thus far in our exposition of the passage we have looked at the peace we have with God that was established by Jesus Christ at the cross; we have looked at the grace... the free and unmerited (un-worked for) gift of God through Jesus Christ... which has been freely bestowed on us as believers... a grace in which we positionally securely stand; we have looked at the certainty of hope that we have that stands as a guarantee of our receiving salvation. In this study we will probe further into these links that tie us eternally to God, namely that we are a possession of love that will not let us go... no matter what.

A HYMN STORY – “O Love that Will Not Let Me Go” by George Matheson (Hymn #292)

*O Love that wilt not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe, that in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.*

*O light that foll'west all my way, I yield my flick'ring torch to thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray, that in thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.*

*O Joy that seekest me through pain, I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain, and feel the promise is not vain,
That morn shall tearless be.*

*O Cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead, and from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.*

Questions:

- (1) What do you think might have prompted the hymn writer to write these words to God, "O love that wit not let me go"?**
- (2) Why do you think the hymn writers soul might have been weary?**
- (3) How can a love that will never let us go help us?**

George Matheson suffered poor eyesight from birth, and at age 15 learned that he was going blind. Not one to be easily discouraged, he enrolled in the University of Glasgow and graduated at age 19. He then began theological studies, and it was while pursuing those that he began totally blind.

Matheson's three sisters rose to the occasion and tutored him through his studies — even going so far as to learn Hebrew, Greek, and Latin to be able to help their brother. With their help he was able to complete his studies.

After graduation, he answered a call to serve as pastor of a church in Innellan, Argylshire, Scotland. He had a successful ministry there, and was later called to serve as pastor of the much larger (2000 member) St. Bernard's Church in Edinburgh.

On the day that one of his sisters was married, Matheson wrote this hymn. He recorded this account of that experience in his journal: "My hymn was composed in the manse of Inellan on the evening of June 6, 1882. I was at that time alone. It was the day of my sister's marriage, and the rest of my family were staying overnight in Glasgow. Something had happened to me which was known only to myself, and which caused me the most severe mental suffering. The hymn was the fruit of that suffering. It was the quickest bit of work I ever did in my life. I had the impression of having it dictated to me by some inward voice than of working it out myself. I am quite sure that the whole work was completed in five minutes, and equally sure that it never received at my hands any retouching or correction. I have no natural gift of rhythm. All the other verses I have written are manufactured articles; this came like a dayspring from on high. I have never been able to gain once more the same fervor in verse."

Matheson obviously didn't intend to tell us what caused his "most severe mental suffering," but people who know his background strongly suspect that it had to do with a heartbreaking experience several years earlier. His fiancée had broken her engagement to him, telling him that

she couldn't see herself going through life married to a blind man. Matheson never married, and it seems likely that his sister's wedding brought to memory the woman that he had loved and the wedding that he had never enjoyed.

At any rate, Matheson's "severe mental suffering" inspired him to write this hymn, "O Love that Wilt Not Let Me Go." The hymn celebrates the constancy of God's love — "love that wilt not let me go" — "light that follow'st all my way" — "joy that seekest me through pain." It concludes by celebrating "Life that shall endless be."

Albert Peace, organist and editor of a journal called *The Scottish Hymnal*, wrote the tune, "St. Margaret," that is associated with the hymn. His experience was amazingly like that of Matheson, in that the music came to him quickly and he was able to write the tune in only five minutes.

When I read the various accounts of Matheson's writing this hymn, one sentence struck me as especially important. It was this — Matheson said, "The hymn was the fruit of that suffering." There is an important lesson in that. All of us suffer some sort of heartbreak or disappointment or disability at some point in our lives. What makes all the difference is our response — whether we let the hardship stop us or inspire us to greater effort.

Matheson suffered two severe blows that could have stopped him — the loss of his eyesight and the loss of his beloved. In both cases, he made the best of a bad situation — and we are all the richer for it. As this hymn reveals, it was his faith in God that kept him going through the adversities that he suffered. He believed that God's love would not let him go — and that God's light would follow him all his way — and that God's joy would seek him through his pain — and that faith made all the difference.

³ The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness." – Jeremiah 31:3

POSSESSION OF LOVE

A. WHAT IS LOVE?

1. The world's view of love – List some words that you would say describe the way the world views love:

lust

infatuation

a fleeting feeling

strong like

love at first sight

passion

emotional bond

sex

fluxuating feeling

*The world says things like, "If you really loved me you would...", or "I just don't feel in love with you anymore...", or will express this feeling for things like, "I love hot dogs, baseball and apple pie!" The world's love often is a very fluxuating and fleeting thing... very fickle, on again off again kind of emotion. Perhaps that is why, in this world love, seems to so often fail... marriage fall apart, and relationship fail.

2. The New Testament worlds view of love:

4 Kind of Love in Greek:

- (1) **Eros = Marital/Sexual Love** – Love between a husband and wife. We get our English word “erotic” love from this word because it refers to sex and the sexual relationship that exist between husband and wife.
- (2) **Storge = Family Love** - Refers to love in the family relationship... love between a parent and child, or between brothers and sister, family kin, etc.
- (3) **Philia = Friend/Brotherly Love** - Love that exists between friends. This Greek word literally means “brotherly love” and is the word for which the U.S. city of Philadelphia gets its name. The city of Philadelphia is also called “The City of Brotherly Love.”
- (4) **Agape = Unconditional love**

2 Words of Love NOT in the Bible: 2 of the above listed words for love appear in the Bible and 2 do not. See if you can guess which 2 are not in the Bible and which two are not used in the Bible.

- (1) Eros
- (2) Storge

2 Words for Love in the Bible:

- (1) Philia
- (2) Agape

3. God’s kind of love:

3 Characteristics of God’s Love: God’s love has many facets or characteristics, but listen as the following three familiar verses are read (or quoted) and see if you can’t name 3 of those characteristics based on these three verses or passages.

- (1) **God’s love is giving (John 3:16)** - *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*
- (2) **God’s love is sacrificial (Roman 5:8)** - *“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*
- (3) **God’s love is unending (Romans 8:37-39)** - *“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Which of the follow 2 types of love, found in the Bible, describe God’s divine love? Place a check [✓] beside the appropriate response.

[] Philia

[] Agape

Characteristics of “Agape” Love:

1. Agape is the word for love most rarely used by the Greeks.

2. Agape is the most commonly used word for love in the New Testament.
3. Agape is used to describe unconditional love. Love that says “no matter what you do I’m going to keep loving you!”
4. Agape is the highest form of love in the Greek language.
5. Agape pictures the deepest kind of commitment. This is committed love.
6. Agape is used in the New Testament to describe God’s divine love.
7. Agape appears twice in Romans 5:1-11. It appears in verse 5 and 8.

B. IS LOVE SECURE?

Test Yourself: Place the letter “s” for “secure” beside the following kind of love that you feel are really secure and discuss why or why not that love is secure.

[] **The world’s view of love** – Not secure because often the world’s love is fleeting, may be based on feeling or emotions that are subject to change, or may be a shallow love.

[] **Eros love** – Not secure because romantic feelings may fade or lose their appeal, also love that is based on sexual feeling can change with age and changes to our bodies.

[] **Storge love** – If one of the more secure forms of earthly love because we seem to stick to our family no matter what indicating a strong love bond, however it really is not a secure love because this love too is subject to things in this world that affect it like divorce, separation and even death of loved ones

[] **Philia love** – This too, may be one of the more secure forms of earthly love because we can have very close bonds in friendship that are very dear to us and that we would do anything to preserve, however this form of love is not really a secure love because it is subject to things in this world that can affect it like disagreements, and division and even death.

[] **Agape love** – This is the only truly “secure” form of love because it is unconditional (not subject to conditions), unmerited (not subject to what we do), and unending (not subject to end... ever).

In our your own words how does it make you feel to know that God loves us with “agape” love? How can I love my salvation if it is based on God’s “agape” or unconditional love for me? Knowing that God is going to keep loving me not matter what I do give me security because I can know that if I sin, or fall, or mess up He still keep right on love me.

2 Proofs that “Agape” Love is Secure: (Romans 5:b-8)

(1) Internal Proof (Romans 5:5b) = The Holy Spirit ⁵ *And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”*

- What is the internal proof of God’s divine (agape) love? The Holy Spirit
- Listen as the following verses are read and write a word beside each that says this internal proof makes us secure in God’s love, eternally secure.

Ephesians 1:13-14 – guarantee

¹³ *And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the*

redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.”- Ephesians 1:13-14

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 - guarantee

“²¹ Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, ²² set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.” – 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

(2) **External Proof (Romans 5:6-8) = Jesus' Death on the Cross** *“⁶ You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

- What is the external proof of God's divine (agape) love? Jesus' death on the cross
- Paul uses the argument of man's love verses God's love to show how great God's love really is.
- The following words describe how secure God's love is:

3 Words that Describe the Security of God's Love:

1. **Constancy** - It would be easy to understand God's loving those who are good, godly, and pure. But the mystery of divine love is that He loved those who are anything but that. Charles Hodge said, “If He loved us because we loved Him, He would love us only so long as we love Him, and on that condition; and then our salvation would depend on the constancy of our treacherous hearts. But as God loved us as sinners, as Christ died for us as ungodly, our salvation depends, as the apostle argues, not on our loveliness, but on the constancy of the love of God.” God doesn't love you because you're worthy of His love. Although human love is attracted by the nature of the object, God's love is built into His very nature. There was nothing in us that attracted Him, yet He still loves us. Love is an unchanging part of the very nature of God and remember Scripture tells us He is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13.8).
2. **Consistency** - Since nothing in us caused God to love us in the first place, what could be in us to make Him stop loving us? Nothing! Remember, He already loved us at our worst. Since Christ died for us when we were ungodly sinners, it isn't a problem for Him to love us now. His love is consistent... He loved us when we were “yet sinner” and He still loves us now, and He will love us eternally. He is not going to stop loving you!
3. **Sacrifice** - Romans 5:6 says that Christ died for the ungodly. The Greek word translated “for” (huper) is better translated “on behalf of,” “instead of,” or “for the sake of.” Christ became a curse on our behalf (Gal. 3.13). At the proper moments in time, Christ put away sin through the sacrifice of Himself. The marvel of it all is that He lovingly died for such unlovely, godless people. Here is our passage in Romans 5:6-8, *“⁶ You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* In verse 7, the Greek word translated as “righteous” and “good” are synonyms. There are times when someone might die

for a good person. But the point of verse 7 is that no one would die for a bad person – no one, that is, except God. Our infinitely holy God is “of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity” (Hab. 1.13). The God who hates every sin – every evil deed, thought, and word – is the same God who reaches out and loves ungodly sinners. That is the surpassing nature of divine love. The Greek word translated “commendeth” (KJV) or “demonstrates” (NIV) means that God proved the nature of His love by having Christ die for us while we were yet sinners. That is the security of our salvation. Since God loved us when we were ungodly, wicked sinners – since he loved us enough to let His Son die for us – will He not love us enough to keep us after we have become His children? When we were saved, we were wretched sinners. But we will never be again. The love of God fills the heart of the believer. It is the kind of love that redeems a godless sinner. Since His love will do that, it will certainly hang onto a saint that sometimes still sins! And His forgiving love is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. He loved us when we were wretched, and He still loves us now that we know Him.

The evidence of God’s sustaining and secure salvation is the peace, and grace and hope He has place in our lives as believers – all evidence of His great unconditional love that says, “Now, no matter what you do I will never, no never, not ever stop loving you!”

How Do You Respond? – Since God loved us when we were ungodly, wicked sinners, and since He loved us enough to let His Son die for us, will He not love us enough to keep us after we have become His children?