

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, April 17, 2019 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study



THE HOPE OF A SAVED AND SECURED LIFE
1 Peter 1:3-5

“Christianity does not provide the reason for each experience of pain, but it does provide deep resources for actually facing suffering with hope and courage rather than bitterness and despair.”
–Dr. Timothy Keller

“Christianity doesn’t deny the reality of suffering and evil. Our hope is not based on the idea that we are going to be free of pain and suffering. Rather, it is based on the conviction that we will triumph over suffering.”
–Brennan Manning

We began our study through 1 and 2 Peter a couple of weeks ago entitled **“Full of Hope-full: How to Make the Best of Time Out of Your Worst of Times.”** The question is how do I develop that kind of life and faith that enable me to be full of “hope-fullness” even in the midst of the “worst of time”... in times of hardship, suffering, and the struggles of this life or as in the case of those in Peter’s day, extreme persecution. That is where First Peter comes in. The Christian life is an overcoming life. Even though we will definitely have problems and personal struggles in this life (trials of many kinds), we will be able to overcome because of Jesus. Because of Him, we have victory over the world, including sinful habits, bitterness, loneliness, guilt, fear, and discouragement. God desires for you to live an overcoming life! Jesus, Himself, said in **John 16:33**, *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”* And in **1 John 5:4-5**, *“⁴For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.”* Christians are overcomers and truly are to live hope-filled Christian lives every day, but let’s be honest, there are many trial and struggles, heartaches and difficulties along... times

of suffering that can daily rob us of our joy and paralyze our faith, steal our hope, and destroy our relationship and weaken our walk... times of suffering can embitter and defeat us if we let it. 1 Peter was written to help believer's believe and grow even in times of suffering... to be "Full of Hope-full."

"While there's life, there's hope!" That ancient Roman saying is still quoted today and, like most adages, it has an element of truth but no guarantee of certainty. It is not the fact of life that determines hope, the faith of life. A Christian believer has a "living hope" (1 Pet. 1:3) because his or her faith and hope are in God (1 Pet. 1:21). This "living hope" is the major theme of Peter's first letter. He is saying to all believers, "Be hopeful!"

Before we study the details of this fascinating letter... one of only two books in all of the Bible written by Jesus closest disciples and a leader of the disciples, and both very short... before we get into our study let's be reminded of some of the most important background information for the book.

5 Important Background Information for the Book of 1 Peter:

- 1. The author of the book of 1 Peter is the Apostle Peter, the head and lead spokesman for Jesus' twelve disciples** - The New Testament had four different names for Peter: Simeon (the Hebrew for Peter's original name, Acts 15:14, 2 Peter 1:1), Simon (the Greek name for Simeon applied 49 times in the New Testament), Cephas (a Greek transliteration of the Aramaic word for rock [כֶּפֶס קִיפָאָס]; this is used to play off of πέτρα), Peter (Πέτρος) the leader and spokesman for the early disciples. This is how he is addressed in the greeting emphasizing his authority to speak. The early New Testament Church almost exclusively regarded Peter as the author of the letter. And of course there is the internal evidence supporting Peter's authorship, the letter claims to be from "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:1), the writer claims to be the readers "fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed" (1 Peter 5:1), the writer identifies "Silas" (Silvanus) as one who helped him to write the letter (1 Peter 5:12; see also Acts 15:22 and 1 Thessalonians 1:1), the writer also sends greetings from Mark (1 Peter 5:13; see Acts 12:12).
- 2. The book of 1 Peter (like Paul's letter to the Galatians) is actually a circular letter, meant to be circulated to multiple early New Testament churches and believers** - Peter is a letter written in normal epistle form and style. The rhetorical and didactic nature of the letter may mean that it was intended to be read aloud to the congregations. It is best to see this letter as a circular type of letter in its present form which was directed to all the churches in the areas mentioned in northern Asia minor.
- 3. The recipient of Peter's letter (also like Paul's letter to the Galatians) were probably a mixed group of Jewish and Gentile believers who were scattered throughout the five Roman provinces of Asia Minor in what is present day Turkey** – This is a circular (or general) letter, but unlike the others, it identifies its recipients. The letter is addressed to those who are from places in northern Asia Minor or modern Turkey (1:1): Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia.
- 4. The letter was written around AD 64, either before or during the Neronian persecution, which helps to date the writing** – Tradition holds that both Paul and Peter were victims of persecution under Nero at Rome after the disastrous fire in the city of Rome on July 19 of

AD 64. The death of Paul is considered to be before Peter's. The timing of Paul's death does not really affect the date of 1 Peter. The letter was written from "Babylon" (1 Peter 5:13) which was probably a cryptic title for Rome... the head of the then pagan, anti-God world (see Rev. 14:8, 17:5&18).

- 5. The purpose of 1 Peter is to encourage and enable Christians/believer to face persecution and suffering with hope in the grace of God** - Although 1 Peter does bare the form of a letter, the tone is that of a homiletical, teaching, instructional sermon designed to provide direction for believers under persecution; at times it also includes theological considerations which support the ethical exhortations, and to exhort his readers under persecution to follow the example of Christ whose life was characterized by patient suffering

Now with those brief reminder of the background to Peter's great letter, let look at the passage this study will be focusing on, 1 Peter 1:3-5, *"³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."*

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- *Why do so many believers/Christians lose the joy of their salvation? What causes that?*
- *Why do so many of us as believers/Christians lose our praise and hope and, instead, walk around sad, depressed, angry, and complaining about the events in our life?*
- *How can we again have our joy, our hope?*

It is wonderful to see a newborn Christian who wants to share his faith with everybody because he is so excited about what God has done in his life. Sadly, as many Christians "mature," this joy and their sense of excitement and awe often tends to fade away. David said this, *"Restore to me the joy of my salvation"* in His great penitential **Psalm 51:12**. Many of us have lost this joy as well.

Again, Peter is writing to Christians that are being persecuted for their faith and have been scattered from their original homes in different parts of the Roman Empire. It would seem like Peter's words in 1 Peter 1:3-5 is not the response you would give to someone who has lost a family member to persecution or lost their friend or home, having to run for their lives at the hands of brutal persecutors. However, Peter starts off this letter glorifying God even in the face to terrible suffering and persecution. He is not being unsympathetic, unfeeling, insensitive or indifferent to the struggles, though His words may sound a bit surprising for what these were going through. He says, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ..."* (1 Peter 1:3)! **Peter can do this because he realizes that whatever they had lost on this earth was miniscule to what God had done in their salvation.** This is why he calls them to praise God.

Similarly, look at what Paul says about our afflictions on the earth in **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**... just listen to Paul's words, *"¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we*

do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

In our passage (1 Peter 1:3-5), Peter is calling these Christians, and us through them, to not lose heart but, in fact, to glory as we look at our great salvation. The hope for this lesson is that we will again look at our salvation and have our joy, and hope restored even in the midst of various trials.

As Christians, I fear that we’ve gotten far away from this eternal perspective. We complain about our trials and run after whatever we think will make us happy in this life (whether it’s biblical or not) because we’ve forgotten the terrors of hell from which God has saved us and the eternal inheritance He has given us in heaven. Peter makes two points here that we want to explore in this study: Whatever our problems, we can praise God because our salvation comes from Him (1:3); and, because our salvation is safe unto eternity (1:4-5).

Big Question: What is so great about our salvation according to 1 Peter 1:3–5 that it should cause us to worship God and have joy and hope that supersedes any suffering in this life?”

THE HOPE OF AN ETERNALLY SAVED LIFE

Whatever our problems, we can praise God because our salvation comes from Him. He is the author, the provider of, and the sustainer our salvation. The writer of Hebrews calls Him the “...*author and finisher of our faith...*” in Hebrews 12:2. Peter says it in verse 3 of our passage, “*³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*”

When Peter describes God as “*the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*” it does not mean that Jesus was not fully God. Jesus is the eternal God in human flesh, the second person of the Trinity. In His humanity, the Father was Jesus’ God. He prayed to the Father; He trusted in the Father. In Jesus’ humanity, the Father (the first person of the Trinity) can rightly be called the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. In His deity, Jesus is related to God the Father as the eternal Son of God.

That Jesus is fully God can be proved in many ways from the Bible. But let me limit myself to three proofs from the immediate context.

3 Proofs of the Jesus’ Divinity in 1 Peter 1:3: (that Jesus is fully God)

- 1. Jesus is mentioned with the Father and the Spirit as having an essential part in our salvation** – Peter wrote in 1 Peter 1:2, “*²(The) elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ...*” It would be blasphemy to mention any being less than God in the same breath with God as Peter does here.
- 2. The title “Lord” given to Jesus by Peter is the Old Testament word “Yahweh” used to describe God** - Peter says in verse 3, “*³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ...*” To call Jesus “Lord” is to call Him the sovereign of the universe, rightly demanding the submission of even heavenly powers to His name as Peter will later say in 1

Peter 3:22 in speaking of Jesus, ²² *(Jesus) who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.*"

3. **The title "Christ" ascribed to Jesus by Peter proves Jesus to be God, because the Messiah (= "Christ") is divine** - Again, Peter says of Jesus in **verse 3**, ³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* ..." Jesus made it clear from Psalm 110 that the Christ is not only David's son, but also David's Lord in **Matthew 22:42-45** saying, ⁴² *'What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?'* They said to Him, *'The Son of David.'* ⁴³ *He said to them, 'How then does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying:* ⁴⁴ *'The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool' ?'* ⁴⁵ *If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his Son?'"*

Thus, Peter makes it clear that our salvation comes to us from God the Father through the work of God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. (As we saw up in verse 2, the Spirit is also involved, although not mentioned in 1:3-5.)

The hope of an eternally saved life is based on who does the saving. We will talk more about the doctrine of "the eternal security of the believer" in a moment, but for now let's probe the question of what make salvation eternally secure or put a different way, what must characterize an eternally saved life in order for there to be a hope that it is eternally saved.

3 Characteristics of an Eternally Saved Life:

1. **God/Jesus alone must responsible for maintaining our salvation** – This is important to our discussion and what Peter is saying. Peter makes it clear that our salvation comes to us from God the Father through the work of God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The hope of an eternally saved life is based on who does the saving. If God/Jesus does the saving and maintains our salvation we are truly "eternally" saved and secure, on the other hand if I have to maintain my own salvation by living up to God's holy standard I'm in big trouble. As the Prophet Isaiah reminds us in Isaiah 64:6, ⁶ *All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.*" Paul, likewise, reminds us in Romans 3:10 & 23, ¹⁰ *As it is written: 'There is no one righteous, not even one' ...* ²³ *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*" We could never be good enough to ever, ever maintain our on salvation because we are all wretched sinners. We would never be able to. One who believes that he or she may lose their salvation has to be basing their salvation on their own ability to keep themselves saved. They are essentially saying, "Since God has saved us, we will maintain our salvation as we continue to match up with God's standards. If we fall to match up at any point we lose our salvation. The teaching that one can
2. **Salvation must be an unconditional proposition** – That is, it is not based on something that we do or have done... it's unconditional. Scripture teaches that salvation is "unconditional" in nature and indeed doesn't depend on anything that we do or have done. Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:8-9, ⁸ *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith —and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—* ⁹ *not by works, so that no one can boast.*" And of course John said in John 3:16, 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.*" And again, Paul would remind us in Romans 6:23, ²³ *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" Those who teach that one can lose their salvation must

hold to the believe that salvation is “conditional”... that is, it is conditioned upon their ability to keep themselves saved, that they don’t do anything to lose it. It’s conditioned on how they live their lives. The problem is that man (mankind) could never match up or be good enough to match up to God’s standard according to Scripture.

3. **Salvation must not in any way be based on a works-righteousness perspective** – Again, Paul’s words in **Ephesians 2:8-9** make this point very clear, ⁸ *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith —and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.”* We are saved by “grace” alone... the free and undeserved, unmerited favor of God. Further Paul would say in **Titus 3:5-7**, ⁵ *“He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.”* We are saved by the “works” of God, done for us through God in the flesh, Jesus Christ, on the cross. We are not saved by our works but by the finished work of Christ. The teaching that one can fall from grace must always insist that salvation should be seen from a works-righteousness perspective.

In 1 Peter 1:3, Peter shows three ways that our salvation comes to us from God. If we’ll grasp this, we will praise God in spite of whatever trials we face in this life and bask in the hope of an eternal salvation that is based on what God alone has done on our behalf... that gives this hope.

3 Things That Give us Hope of an Eternally Saved Life as Believers:

1. **We have hope because our salvation comes from God’s great mercy** – Notice what Paul says again in the first part of verse 3, ³ *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us...”* Our salvation is solely the work of God in His “abundant mercy.” I’m so glad God’s mercy is “abundant!” Arent’ you! **Salvation never comes from any merit or worth or from anything in us.** In fact, it comes in spite of us. We cannot do anything to earn it. We cannot do anything to predispose God to grant it. Two closely associated words in our Christian vocabulary are the words “mercy” and “grace.” The two are very interrelated and in close association, but are also distinctively different.

The difference between “mercy” and “grace”:

- (1) **Grace = “The free and unmerited favor of God in which we get what we don’t deserve.”**
- (2) **Mercy – “The free and unmerited favor of God in which we don’t get what we do deserve.”**

Mercy is His undeserved favor. Yes! Just like grace. It is essentially synonymous with the word “grace.” If there is a difference, it may be as R.C. Trench put it, **“Grace is God’s free gift, displayed in the forgiveness of sins, extended to us as we are guilty, whereas mercy is His love extended to us as we are miserable”** (R. C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* [Eerdmans], p. 170). **Mercy has the connotation of God’s compassion toward those who suffer.** As **Martin Luther** points out (*Commentary on Peter and Jude* [Kregel], p. 20), **“Human nature cherishes the thought that we, through our own strength, free will, good works and merit, or by keeping God’s law, can atone for our sins and acquire eternal**

salvation. But that is the very thing that we must let go of if we want to experience God's mercy. If we deserve salvation, it does not come through God's mercy. We only deserve His wrath because of our great sin, but He has shown us great mercy."

If our salvation depends on our own goodness, it's not very secure, to say the least! What if we do something bad? What if God doesn't grade on the curve, or what if the curve is higher than we thought? To expect that we will get into heaven because of our own goodness is to face eternity with false hope. But if we let go of our supposed goodness and realize that we deserve God's wrath, and we appeal to Him for His great mercy, then our hope of salvation is as secure as the mercy of God! Whatever problems we face, we can praise Him because our salvation comes from His great mercy!

2. **We have hope because our salvation comes from God's life-giving power** – Listen to it again in 1 Peter 1:3, *"³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope..."* That is an interesting phrase, *"... has begotten us again to a living hope..."* You get what he is saying? Right? He is talking about being "born again." Peter essentially says that God **"has caused us to be born again."** This reflects Jesus' language to Nicodemus (with which Peter no doubt was familiar, he was most likely there when Jesus had this conversation with Nicodemus), that unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3). **READ: John 3:1-17** Just as we were born physically, so we must be born spiritually. And, just as we had nothing to do with our physical birth—we didn't will it; we didn't help the process; we didn't decide, "I'd like to be born to these parents in this time and way"—so we cannot assist in our spiritual birth. It must come from the life-giving power of God (John 1:12-13; 6:44). But this also gives us a reason to praise God. If our salvation comes from our effort or will or performance, then it rests on shaky ground. But if it comes from the sovereign will of God, based upon His mighty power to bring us out of spiritual death into life, then it's a sure thing. However shaky life is, we can praise God because our deliverance from spiritual death comes from God, not from ourselves.
3. **We have hope because our salvation comes from the resurrection of Jesus Christ** - Notice verse 3 with me again, *"³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."* Peter write God *"has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."* We are about to celebrate the most important and significant even in the history of the world and for your salvation and mine... for the salvation of mankind it could not be more important. If God had left Jesus in the grave, our salvation would not be complete. In His death on the cross, Jesus bore our sins. But if He had not been raised bodily, He would not have conquered sin and death.

As Paul said, *"If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins"* (1 Cor. 15:17). Peter was an eyewitness of the risen Jesus Christ. At first he did not believe the reports that Jesus was risen. But Christ's many appearances to the apostles before He ascended into heaven turned Peter's doubts into sure and convincing testimony. His depression and gloom over the crucifixion were turned into living hope—vital, strong, growing hope. Unlike worldly hope that often fades and grows weaker over time, living hope grows stronger as the day of its realization draws closer. Whatever trials we face, we can

praise God because we have a living hope that rests on the sure fact of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus Peter wants us to know that no matter how great our problems, we can praise God because our salvation comes from God, not from ourselves or our efforts to obtain or keep it.

You get it! We have the hope of an eternal saved life because of what God in Jesus has done for us, and no matter what happens in this life we know where our hope and eternal future rest. Suffering, persecution, pain, sickness, heartache, trials, challenges, difficulties can't take that away from us. We are victorious in Jesus, and as Peter began his letter to these suffering saints he wasn't them to be grounded in the hope of their eternal salvation. You can be too! It starts with a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. But not only is our salvation and eternal one, we can also rest in the fact that it is "secure."

THE HOPE OF AN ETERNALLY SECURED LIFE

Whatever our problems, we can praise God because our salvation is safe unto eternity. This passage in 1 Peter 1:3-5 is one of the greatest and perhaps most overlooked passages on the doctrine of "the eternal security of the believer" in all of Scripture. "The Doctrine of the Eternal Security of the Believer" is one of the more debated doctrine in the Christian church.

Just for you information: Just to give you an idea of how controversial and debated the subject of eternal security in among Christians and main-line Christian denominations try your hand at the following exercise. We have completed an exercise something like this in before, but let's give it another try. Please a check mark [✓] beside the Christian denominations that you think believe in the doctrine of eternal security.

Southern Baptist
 Assembly of God
 Lutheran
 Catholic
 Nazarene
 Church of Christ

Methodist
 Presbyterian
 Free Will Baptist
 Episcopal
 Evangelical Free
 Pentecostal

That is an indication of how controversial this subject is among Christians and Christian groups. This doesn't even speak to the large number of non-denominational and upstart church today. It may also show us our need to understand some of the basic and fundamental doctrine and theology of Scripture... the basics of the Christian faith on such things as salvation, sin, atonement, redemption... how a person is saved and what keeps them saved. No wonder we have so many "hopeless" believers/Christians, when we have every reason to be so "hope-filled." We often don't even understand the very basic truths of our very salvation.

In your own words, how would you define "eternal security?" Take a few moment and write your own definition of what you believe is meant by "eternal security."

Other Names for the Doctrine of “The Eternal Security of the Believer” – The doctrine known as “The Eternal Security of the Believer” is also known by several different names. These other names may or may not rightly describe the doctrine, but they are none the less different titles that you may hear used to refer to the same thing.

4 Names for The Doctrine of Eternal Security:

(1) Perseverance or The Perseverance of the Saints – This is the terminology used by famous theologian and reformer, John Calvin and his later followers. This term is used in regard to “final perseverance” of the saints. It means that believers, “can neither totally or finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end and be eternally saved.” All this according to the Westminster Confession. This doctrinal terminology for eternal security, “The Perseverance of the Saints” make us one of the petals in the tulip of Calvinism.

TULIP of 5 Point Calvinism

Total Depravity - Sin has affected all parts of man. The heart, emotions, will, mind, and body are all affected by sin. We are completely sinful.

Unconditional Election - God does not base His election on anything He sees in the individual. He chooses the elect according to the kind intention of His will (Eph. 1:4-8; Rom. 9:11) without any consideration of merit within the individual.

Limited Atonement - Jesus died only for the elect. Though Jesus’ sacrifice was sufficient for all, it was not efficacious for all. Jesus only bore the sins of the elect.

Irresistible Grace - When God calls his elect into salvation, they cannot resist.

Perseverance of the Saints - You cannot lose your salvation. Because the Father has elected, the Son has redeemed, and the Holy Spirit has applied salvation, those thus saved are eternally secure.

- (2) Security of the Believer** – This is the shortened term most often used by proponents of the doctrine today.
- (3) Assurance of Salvation** – Sometimes the doctrine of eternal security is referred to as “Assurance of Salvation.” This term or phrase is actually not a good description of the doctrine, but is very different. We will look at the difference briefly in this study.
- (4) Once Saved, Always Saved** - While this is a somewhat accurate description of the doctrine of eternal security it is an oversimplification of the doctrine, and it is the terminology or phrase most commonly used by who do not hold to the doctrine... those who would say that Scripture teaches otherwise. Another phrase that is sometimes used along with “once saved, always saved” is “cheap grace” meaning that the emphasis on the doctrine of eternal security is upon being saved by grace alone plus nothing else cheapens grace and indicates that one could do whatever he or she wants and live as they please because they are recipients of grace.

A Good Definition of Eternal Security – A good, concise definition of the eternal security of the believer is:

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

3 Important Parts to the Definition:

- (1) **“the work of God” – John 3:16**
- (2) **“the gift of salvation” – Ephesians 2:8-9**
- (3) **“salvation... is forever and cannot be lost” – Romans 6:23**

Clearing Up A Difference – At this point it is important for us to clear up a misunderstanding that is often brought up in any discussion on the doctrine of eternal security and that is the difference between eternal security and assurance of salvation. There is a big difference between the two as already stated.

The Basic Difference Between Eternal Security and Assurance of Salvation:

- (1) **Eternal Security is a doctrine based on the interpretation of Scriptural teaching on the subject of salvation.**
- (2) **Assurance of salvation is mental, emotional, and psychological precept or concept that is experienced as a realization that one possesses usually as one grows and matures in the faith through proper teaching and grounding in the word of God.**
- (3) **Eternal Security is based more on knowledge and interpretation**
- (4) **Assurance is based, to large extent, on feeling and emotion.**
- (5) **Both often bring unnecessary, but terrible trauma to a person’s life.**

5 Reasons People Often Lack Assurance:

- (1) **Some doubt the reality of their commitment to Christ** – No evidence/commitment in their life and it causes them to doubt
- (2) **Some question the correctness of the procedure they went through** – Can’t pin point a specific time, didn’t follow the right procedure, don’t think they did it right the first time
- (3) **Those who don’t believe in eternal security will naturally lack assurance** – May be always wondering if they are still saved or if they need to do it again
- (4) **Sin** – Sin in a believers life will always lead to doubt if it remains unconfessed
- (5) **A lost condition** – For that one who is having doubts or lack of assurance of their salvation they should check it out and be sure they are saved because some who doubt have reason to... they are indeed lost

Again, There is much hope that can be ours when we understand that our salvation is eternal and “eternally secure. Whatever our problems, we can praise God because our salvation is safe unto eternity. This passage in 1 Peter 1:3-5 is one of the greatest and perhaps most overlooked passages on the doctrine of “the eternal security of the believer” in all of Scripture. “The Doctrine of the Eternal Security of the Believer” is one of the more debated doctrine in the Christian church. Notice it again in 1 Peter 1:3-5, “³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and

undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵ who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” Peter goes on to describe our salvation as an inheritance, locked up in the bank vault of heaven, guarded against every intruder who might take it from us. And we are assured that God’s power is guarding us so that someday we will enjoy our inheritance.

Two Important Truths from 1 Peter 1:4-5 Concerning The Security of our Salvation:

1. Our salvation is a secure inheritance in heaven (1 Peter 1:4) – I hate reading legal documents. Why attorneys can’t write in plain English is beyond me, except that it protects their jobs to write in language that no one else can understand. Reading or listening to legal documents being read has to be the ultimate boring activity. But there’s one legal document where we all would hang on every word: The reading of a will, when we know that we are named as heirs of a large inheritance.

Peter says that our salvation is an inheritance kept in heaven for us. Of course, Christ Himself is our inheritance. But it also includes all that He has provided and will provide for those whom He has purchased with His blood. It is so vast and indescribable that the only way Peter can describe it is by telling us some things that it is not: It is not perishable, not defiled, and not fading.

Peter’s Description of the Inheritance of Believers:

- (1) **It *imperishable*** - Peter means that our salvation is free from death and decay. Any human inheritance is subject both to death and decay. I may die before I can obtain and enjoy a human inheritance. I may be the heir to billions, but it won’t do me a bit of good if I die. If I manage to get it, it’s still subject to moth, rust, and thieves, as Jesus pointed out, so I could easily lose it. But our heavenly inheritance is imperishable; it can’t be destroyed.
- (2) **It *undefiled*** - Which means that it’s free from moral impurity or uncleanness of any kind. Earthly inheritances can be tainted and they can taint the person receiving them. Families of wealthy men who have died have been known to degenerate into nasty quarrels that last for years as greedy family members fight over their share of the inheritance. Everyone is defiled by that kind of thing. But our heavenly inheritance is not that way. I can’t take anything from your inheritance and you can’t take anything from mine. God has plenty in store for us all.
- (3) **It *will not fade away*** - It is free from the ravages of time. Earthly inheritances get used up the more time goes on. But God’s riches are inexhaustible! Throughout eternity we will not get to the bottom of all that He has provided for us who are in Christ. His riches are reserved in heaven for us and nothing can diminish or destroy what God Himself has determined to give us!

But, you may be thinking, it’s nice that all that’s in heaven. But what if I don’t make it to heaven? What if I fall by the wayside so that I never get to where my inheritance is located?

2. Our salvation is securely guarded by God’s power through faith (1 Peter 1:5) - “Protected” or “kept” is a military term (see 2 Cor. 11:32) that implies that those who are born again are under enemy attack. Satan wants to keep us from gaining our inheritance. But

we are surrounded by a garrison of troops conducting us with safe passage to the place where our eternal inheritance awaits us. But it is no vulnerable earthly army that protects us—it is the very power of God!

What could be more powerful than the power of the God who spoke the universe into existence! Thus we are guarded for our salvation. When Peter says that our salvation is “ready to be revealed in the last time,” he means that we now only enjoy a small part of what God has laid in store for us. We couldn’t even begin to comprehend it all, but we can trust God that it will be far better than we can imagine. Heaven will not be the boring picture you see in cartoons—sitting around on clouds in white robes strumming harps forever. The creative God who made such a complex universe that modern science cannot even begin to figure it out can keep us creatively engaged throughout eternity.

Our salvation is ready to be revealed, like a statue waiting to be unveiled. The word “ready” is also used in 1 Peter 4:5 to warn that God is ready to judge the living and the dead. The future holds one or the other for every person: Either you wait to see the veil lifted on your salvation, or you wait to face God in judgment. Both are prepared.

What determines your future is seen in the phrase, “through faith.” We receive God’s salvation and live the Christian life through faith. Maybe you’re thinking, “I only wish I could have that kind of faith, but I don’t!” Ah, but you do! You have plenty of faith. The problem is, you’re putting it in the wrong object if it is not in the Lord Jesus Christ and what He did for you on the cross. If your faith is not in Him, then it is in yourself or in some god of your own making. If your faith is in yourself, then you’re saying, “I believe that I’m a good enough person to get to heaven by my own efforts.” That’s tremendous faith, but it’s placed on a very faulty and inadequate object. God says that no flesh will boast in His sight.

If you could get to heaven by your own good works, then you could boast in yourself. But God alone is worthy of glory. So He humbles us by making us let go of all trust in ourselves. We must cast ourselves completely on His great mercy. We cannot do this in and of ourselves. He must impart saving faith to us, which humbles our pride and gives all the glory to what God has done in Jesus Christ. Thus God has ordained that we receive His salvation by faith, not in ourselves, but in Christ alone. We live the Christian life in the same manner, trusting each day in what Christ is to us and what He has done for us. Those who have tasted of His mercy will persevere in faith until that great day when faith becomes sight.

CONCLUSION

Many years ago a team of mountain climbers began the dangerous descent of one of the peaks in the Swiss Alps. The first man in the line lost his foothold and slipped over the ledge. The next two men were dragged after him, but the experienced climbers above braced themselves and stood firm to bear the shock. But when the rope ran its length, rather than bearing the weight, it snapped like a string. Horrified, the climbers saw their friends fall to their deaths on the glacier 4,000 feet below. For half an hour the other three stayed immobilized with fear. Finally they nerved themselves to continue their perilous descent. Hours later they arrived in Zermatt to tell their sad story. When the climbers examined the rope to find out why it failed, they were

shocked. True Alpine Club rope has a red strand running through it, but this rope did not. It was a weak substitute. (“Our Daily Bread,” 6/82.)

The death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the only thing strong enough to save us from our sins. If your faith is in yourself or your own goodness, the rope will snap and you will perish. If your faith is in what God has done through Christ because of His great mercy, then no matter what problems you face now, you can join Peter in proclaiming, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, because He has saved me according to His great mercy. Because my salvation is not from myself, but from God, I am saved unto eternity!” It’s far better than inheriting \$100 million!

Discussion Questions

- 1. Is it wrong to share the gospel from the angle of what it can provide now? Cite biblical evidence.**
 - 2. How can we develop an eternal perspective in the midst of present problems?**
 - 3. Should an unfaithful professing Christian be assured of salvation?**
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