

ETERNAL SALVATION

Understanding your salvation is very important to your stability as a believer. Not comprehending the great operation of God to deliver you for eternity will lead you to living a defeated Christian life. Jesus, "...the author of eternal salvation" (**Heb 5:9**) has performed a complete work to deliver you from the world, the flesh, and Satan. He has provided a salvation so secure that nothing can separate you from the love of God. In this study we will discuss eight different concepts that assure the security of the believer. We will then deal with verses that, because of misinterpretation obscure the truth.

I. THE USE OF STRONG STATEMENTS BY JESUS

- ❑ **John 3:16-20** - You shall "not" perish.
- ❑ **John 3:36** - Those that believe "hath" everlasting life.

NOTE: How long is everlasting life? Does it have an end? Does it start at physical death or spiritual birth? Compare **John 5:24**. It starts at the time you accept Christ.

- ❑ **John 6:37** - He will in "no wise" cast you out.
- ❑ **John 10:27-31** - You will "never" perish and you will never be plucked out of Christ's or the Father's hands.
- ❑ **Heb 13:5-6** – "...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

DEFN: (Webster's) "Forsake" – To quit or leave entirely; To desert; To abandon; To depart from.

II. THE CONCEPT OF SONSHIP

- ❑ **John 1:12-13** - You are born of God, not of the will of the flesh.
- ❑ **John 3:3-7** - A miracle birth took place by the power of the Spirit.
- ❑ **1 Pet 1:23-2:2** - You are born again of incorruptible seed and are become as a newborn babe.
- ❑ **1 John 3:9; 4:7; 5:1,4,18** - You are born of God.
- ❑ **Ecc 11:4-9** - A birth in the Spirit happens like a physical birth.

NOTE: The spiritual birth is very similar to the physical birth. No matter what transactions follow, the fact cannot be erased that a son was born from the loins of his father. He will always be his son!

III. GOD IS ABLE TO KEEP!

- ❑ **Rom 8:35-39** – “Who (or what) shall separate us from the love of Christ”? Nothing! Not things present nor things to come!

NOTE: True Christians need to understand God’s love for them. We are begotten by His own will (**John 1:13**) and He has saved us for His own special purpose (**Rom 8:28-29**). Because He loves us, He is “keeping” us so that His purpose can be accomplished in us.

- ❑ **Ecc 3:14** (Memory Verse) - Whatsoever God does is forever! Salvation is a miracle that God has performed! It is a birth from God. It is an eternal work.
- ❑ **Phi 1:6** (Memory Verse) - God is able to finish the work He has begun.
- ❑ **Jude 1** - We are “preserved” in Jesus.

DEFN: “Preserved” - To save, to keep safe or secure from injury, loss, or destruction; To defend or guard from harm, evil or hurt; To protect.

- ❑ **2 Tim 1:12** (Memory Verse) - Paul was persuaded of God's ability to keep.
- ❑ **1 Pet 1:5** (Memory Verse) - We are “...kept by the power of God...”

NOTE: The context here is that Peter is trying to encourage the believers that God’s promises are sure and their inheritance is secure; even though they are going through diverse trials and temptations.

- ❑ **Heb 7:25** (Memory Verse) – “...he is able also to save them to the uttermost...”

IV. SEALING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- ❑ **Eph 4:30** - You are “...sealed unto the day of redemption” (the day you get your glorified body).
- ❑ **Eph 1:13-14** - When are you sealed? After you believe.
- ❑ **2 Cor 1:21-22** - The Spirit is given as an earnest.

DEFN: “Earnest” - Anything that gives assurance, pledge, promise, or indication of what is to follow. A part of something delivered beforehand, as a security; especially, in law, part of the price of the commodity bargained for, paid by the buyer to prove the validity of the transaction.

- ❑ **Gal 4:6-7** - The Spirit of His Son has been placed in our hearts to confirm our Father-son relationship.
- ❑ **2 Tim 2:19** - The foundation of God that always stands sure is Jesus Christ (**1 Cor 3:10-15**) and His seal is the Spirit (**Rom 8:16**). Do you sense His Spirit bearing witness with your spirit?

V. THE OPERATION OF GOD

- ❑ **Col 2:10-14** - God cut away the body of flesh from the soul of man and sealed it with His Spirit.

NOTE: In circumcision, the flesh is cut off completely and is a once-and-for-all operation. So it is in the circumcision of the heart, the flesh is cut off permanently from the soul. (**Rom 2:28-29**) It is an operation that is irreversible. **Ecc 3:14**

- ❑ **Rom 7:15-21** - It is no more you that sins, but sin that dwells in your flesh.
- ❑ **1 John 3:9-10** - The new man cannot sin because the old man has been cut away and the new man is sealed by the Spirit.
- ❑ **Eph 4:24** - You are "...created in righteousness and true holiness" in Christ Jesus.
- ❑ **2 Cor 5:17** - You are made a new creature in Christ; old things pass away; all things become new. "If" you are in Christ, your life will change.

NOTE: The question of "if" is whether you are in Christ or not. It is not a question of Christ's ability to change you. (**Phi 2:12-13; 2 Cor 13:5**)

VI. WHOM GOD FOREKNOWS, HE SAVES

- ❑ **Rom 8:28-33** - God, who knows the end from the beginning, knows the heart of man from the beginning, and therefore knows who will be saved. Just because He knows does not make Him responsible for man's free will to choose. If God knows from the beginning, then how can one lose his salvation?
- ❑ **1 Pet 1:2** - We are elect according to foreknowledge. Man is not predestined to hell, but God knows the heart. He can declare the end from the beginning. (**Isa 46:9-10**)
- ❑ **Eph 1:4-11** - He knew from the beginning.

NOTE: Our salvation is part of God's eternal process:

1. Foreknowledge of God sees man's choice
- 2. In Christ, the choice of man's will for Christ
- | 3. Predestined to be conformed
- | **In** 4. Called by God
- | **Christ** 5. Man receives Christ as Saviour
- | 6. Justified by Christ
- 7. Glorified by the Spirit

If this is an eternal process that God has established since the foundation of the world, then how could you lose your salvation? No man is predestined to hell. If a man receives Christ as Saviour, he is in this eternal process because God foreknew him.

VII. SALVATION DELIVERS FROM ALL SIN

- ❑ **Col 2:13-14** - You are forgiven “all trespasses”; past, present, and future.

NOTE: All your sins were future at the time of the cross. He imputes (charges to your account) His righteousness to you at the point of salvation. (**2 Cor 5:21; Rom 3:25**)

- ❑ **1 John 1:7** - You are cleansed from “all sin”.
- ❑ **Tit 2:14** - You are cleansed from “all iniquity”.
- ❑ **Acts 13:38-39** - You are justified from “all things”.
- ❑ **Heb 10:15-17; Isa 43:25** - The Lord will not remember your sins anymore.
- ❑ **Psa 103:12** - Our sins are separated from us as far as east is from west.
- ❑ **Isa 44:21-22** - He blotted out your sins like a thick cloud. You are the child of Abraham by faith. (**Gal 3:29**)
- ❑ **Mic 7:18-19** - He cast your sins in the depths of the sea.
- ❑ **Isa 38:17** - He put all your sins behind His back.

VIII. GOD UPHOLDS THE RIGHTEOUS

- ❑ **Psa 37:23-25, 28** - The “good” man here is a “saved” man if you look at the context (**vs 25**).
- ❑ **Jude 24** - God promises that He will uphold us.
- ❑ **Pro 24:16** - Even if we were to fall seven times, we have God’s promise that we will rise again.
- ❑ **2 Pet 2:9** - God delivers the godly but not the unjust.

IX. DIFFICULT PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE

NOTE: After reading all the above verses, could you honestly stand on the other side and disregard them without contradiction in your mind? Always remember to interpret difficult portions of scripture with easy portions - not vise versa!

- ❑ **Eze 3:17-21** – In this portion, a righteous man is one that keeps the law. The statement, “the righteousness that he has done”, or again “his righteousness”, is not God’s righteousness that comes by faith. (**Rom 3:23-28; Rom 10:1-4**) Therefore, this portion is not dealing with a man losing his salvation, but is challenging the prophet to warn all men that would sin. Even as Jesus rebuked the Pharisees (very zealous men for the righteousness of the law) to repent.

- ❑ **Matt 24:10-13** - This is dealing with saving of life, not the soul. The context is the Tribulation period when tremendous destruction will take place on earth. The elect, which are the Jews, will go through the Great Tribulation and will come out the other side into the Millennium. Compare **Matt 24:22**.

- ❑ **John 15:1-8** - The branches are “in me” - meaning in Christ
 - (**15:2**) **A.** These branches are believers that bear little or no fruit for the glory of God. This is a sober warning that the Lord may choose to cut off their life prematurely. Even as Paul told the Corinthian church to turn such a one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (**1 Cor 5:5**).
 - B.** Another plausible interpretation is this. In a vineyard, some vine branches grow toward the ground and attach themselves to the earth by growing small roots. These vines do not bear fruit. In a typical procedure of husbandry, the farmer “takes away” the vine branch from the earth and places rocks underneath it to cut it off from the earth and turns it towards the sky where it can obtain sunlight. You can quickly see the spiritual implications of this illustration.

- (**15:6**) - If a man abides not in Christ, he will dry up and men will cast him into the fire. This is dealing with the judgment of men because of the loss of one’s testimony for Christ. Like Paul stated in **1 Cor 9:27** that he keeps under his body and brings it into subjection so when he preaches to others, he would not be a “castaway” (disapproved by God or man).

- ❑ **Rom 11:21-22** - This is dealing with nations of unbelief, not the individual. It is sharing God’s overall plan for the Jews and Gentiles. The Jews, due to unbelief, were cut off as the fruit-bearing nation to deliver the gospel of the kingdom to the world. The Gentiles in the future will also be cut off as the propagators of the faith and the Jews restored to their original calling. Compare **Rom 11:25-27**.

- ❑ **Gal 5:4** - This is referring to falling from the “doctrine” of grace, back to the law. Compare **Gal 5:1-8; 2:16-21**. This is not dealing with salvation, but with pleasing God in service. The Galatians were trying to please God by keeping the law and not by faith serving in love (**Heb 11:6**).

- ❑ **Col 1:23** - The “if” is referring to the previous verse of being presented holy, and unblamable, and unprovable in His sight. It is not referring to salvation.

- ❑ **2 Tim 2:12-13** – If we deny Him is referring to an unbeliever like Judas Iscariot who was a devil from the beginning (**John 6:70**). If we as a believer lack in belief, the promise in verse 13 reassures us that He will save us anyway for His name sake. Anyone who is truly saved would not in heart deny the Lord because he understands what he has been saved from and saved to. Peter denied the Lord outwardly but not in heart and the Lord Jesus knew this.

- **Heb 3; 6; 10** – These are very difficult portions to grasp. Examine them carefully comparing scripture with scripture. Do not quickly dismiss these interpretations in your mind. Remember the admonition of the Lord in **1 Cor 8:2** that states “...if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.” The following thoughts are only some of several interpretations offered by fundamentalists.

NOTE: To understand these portions in Hebrews, you must have a good overview of who the author (probably Paul) is exhorting. He is speaking to holy brethren (**Heb 3:1**) who had let things slip in their lives and were neglecting their great salvation (**Heb 2:1-3**). Because of it, they were dull of hearing and had need that one teach them again the first principles of the oracles of God (**Heb 5:11-12**). They were losing confidence in whom they believed and were starting to forsake the assembly of themselves together (**Heb 10:22-25, 32, 35-36**). In heart, they were close to becoming mindful of the country from which they came and might be given opportunity to return (**Heb 11:15**) if they did not show the same diligence to believe the promises (**Heb 6:11-12**). They would fall back as Peter stated in **2 Pet 1:3-10**. Only those who wholly follow the Lord and believe the promises become elders that obtain a good report (**Heb 11:2**). All three difficult portions are dealing with the same set of believers that were not going on to perfection in full assurance. Therefore, they are being compared with the Israelites that would not cross the Jordan at Kadeshbarnea.

- **Heb 3:1-19** - Remember, this is a very difficult portion of scripture. Read these verses in context from **Heb 3:1-4:16**. This portion is dealing with the children of Israel who did not enter into the Promised Land (a picture of the abundant spiritual life in Christ) because of unbelief. They did not keep their confidence in Christ to give them victory and, consequently they would not yield to His Word. Therefore, God in His wrath would not let them enter because of unbelief. They wandered in circles in the desert 40 years with God providing for their carnal needs, but they were miserable. Only those that were of another spirit and wholly followed the Lord (**Num 14:24**) entered into the land because they trusted God's Word completely. You, like them, must run the race with patience and “...lay aside every weight and the sin (of unbelief) which doth so easily beset us.” (**Heb 12:1**)
- **Heb 6:1-9** - Again, this is a difficult portion of scripture. Read these verses in context from **Heb 5:11 - 6:9**. Two interpretations of this portion are offered.
- The first is as follows. Notice he is dealing with saved people who were not going on to perfection. The brethren are being exhorted to get off the milk portions of scripture. They were constantly preaching and teaching repentance from dead works, faith toward God, baptisms, hell fire, etc. They were to go on to perfection if God permitted -- if they hadn't slipped too far. (**Heb 2:1**) In other words, if they were mindful from where they came, they might be given opportunity to return. (**Heb 11:15**) This is a stern warning to the readers of the Hebrew epistle. Paul is reflecting on the similar incident that occurred to the children of Israel when they would not cross the Jordan at Kadeshbarnea. God would not permit them to go on into the Promised Land, a picture of

spiritual maturity and the abundant Christian life -- rest, ceasing from their own labors! He made them wander 40 years until all who were tempted dropped dead because they limited the Holy One of Israel (**Psa 78:41**). The Lord gave them their desire, but sent leanness to their soul (**Num 14:2,28; Psa 106:15**). Therefore, it is impossible to renew them unto repentance (not salvation) because God will not allow it. **2 Tim 2:25-26** hints to this concept that the Lord is in control of repentance rather than man. Thus they brought forth briars and thorns in their lives, which will be burned up at the Judgment Seat of Christ (**1 Cor 3:10-15**). Even Moses as a leader, who smote the rock twice, didn't enter the Promised Land because he (in a picture) "crucified the Son of God afresh" and didn't sanctify the Lord by just speaking to the rock. He attempted to get the people right with God by teaching them to crucify Christ again. (**Num 20:7-12; Deu 32:48-52; Heb 4:16**) A deeper spiritual picture is alluded to here. The Law, as Moses is pictured, would always crucify Christ again and again for our sin. The Law, "who's eye is not dim" nor it's "natural force abated" (**Deu 34:7**), requires sacrifice again and again because of man's failure to be perfect. But Christ sweetly took it to the mount and put it to death so the people could enter into the Promised Land by faith in God's power. By faith you are saved and by faith you are perfected. It is God that perfects that which concerns you as you trust Him to defeat the giants in your life. (**Psa 138:8**)

NOTE: If this were teaching that you could lose your salvation, then it would also teach that you could never be forgiven if you were to fall which is not a truth supported by the Scriptures!

- Another interpretation of this portion of scripture needs to be studied. Read these verses in context from **Heb 5:1-6:9**. Notice he is dealing with saved people who were not going on to perfection. The brethren are being exhorted to get off the milk portions of scripture. They were constantly preaching and teaching repentance from dead works, faith toward God, baptisms, hell fire, etc. **Heb 6:1** – "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, (in reference to **Heb 5:11-14**) let us go on unto perfection..." Perfection in what, meat, full age with the senses exercised, or the perfection of entering into God's rest? (**Heb 4**) The case for full age is based on the context of **Heb 5:1-10**. Paul is for the first time teaching the deep truths of the Priesthood of Jesus after the order of Melchisedek. Though he refers to Christ as a High Priest in **Heb 2:17; 3:1; 4:14**; it is in **chapter 5** that he links Christ's Priesthood with Melchisedek. Thus bringing us to another context in **5:11**; "...of whom we have many things to say..." The context now is one of Christ's Priesthood and Paul's inability to teach it in full. They could not receive what he was talking about because they were dull of hearing. They should have been teaching these principles, but they had need of milk and not strong meat. Paul presents two courses of action in **verses 13 and 14**; either you can remain a babe, or grow to full age. What then would be the consequences? You remain unskillful in the Word, or you become able to discern. Therefore, Paul in **6:1** is challenging them to leave these principles and to move on to perfection (maturity, full age). Paul suggests two equally important thoughts:

NOTE: In Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, **Leaving:** (#G863) to send forth, in various applications: cry, forgive, forsake, lay aside, leave, let (alone, be, go have), omit put (send) away, remit suffer, yield up.

Let us go on: (G5342) (A primary verb) to bear or carry, bring (forth), carry, be driven, endure, go on, lay, lead, more, reach, rushing, uphold.

Let us take a closer look at each one. **Leaving:** First, what would they be leaving, the first principles and oracles? Yes but in a positive sense, not a negative one. The challenge here is to set the principles and oracles aside because they were becoming preoccupied to the point of being stagnant. (Understand that the semi-colon, which divides this verse, makes both elements equally important.) The first element of this verse stands on its own merit, however the second element is dependent upon the first. The second element of this verse is related to the suggestion to leave the first principles, not by re-laying the foundation (first principle doctrines). They should have understood the doctrine of Christ in relationship to salvation. They needed to move on.

Let us go on: Secondly, the challenge of “let us go on...”, is a suggestion to carry or bear a load or a responsibility. We are constantly exhorted to teach others and to personally press toward a Christian maturity. **Matt 5:48; 1 Cor 13:10-11; Eph 4:12; Phil 3:12-15** “And this will we do, if God permit.” **Heb 6:3** Permits us to do what? This is a very important and difficult verse and we need to look at it in every possible application. The key to understanding this verse is to understand the context, which is the need to grow from milk to meat, from babes to full age. “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ... not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. **“And this will we do if God permit.”** They would have continued to re-lay the foundation, if God permitted it. The truth of the matter is, God would not permit us to lay the foundation over again. There is only one foundation that has been laid, (Jesus Christ). (**Matt 7:25; Luke 6:48; 1 Cor 3:10-12; 1 Tim 6:19; 2 Tim 2:19**) In God's eyes it is a waste of time to lay these foundations over again. Because once saved, it is impossible to be renewed unto repentance (salvation), seeing that it would crucify Christ afresh. It would be saying that what Christ did on the cross is not enough to completely save. Is it possible for a believer to crucify Christ afresh (renewed to salvation)? Or to say the work of Christ was not complete? This would bring Christ to an open shame even as Moses, when he smote the rock instead of speaking in belief. Christ died for our sins only once! (**Num 20:7-12**) Moving on to perfection brings growth and blessings from God, to remain immature will only produce briars and thorns, which in the end will be burned. (**1 Cor 3:10-15**)

EXAMPLE: Let's say you have a child who continues in their education, but because they are slothful or negligent, they stay in the same grade from year to year, showing no improvement. If you “permit” them, and don't challenge them, they will remain stagnant. As Paul alluded to in **verse 9**, “...we are persuaded better things of you...” In like manner, God provokes us to move on. Paul therefore is speaking hypothetically in **Heb 6:3**.

Now we can see as we continue reading in **chapters 6 & 7 and 8** how the author is continuing on with the context of Christ's Priesthood after the order of Melchisedek (**Heb 5:11**).

- **Heb 10:26-31** - Again, this is a difficult portion of scripture. Read these verses in context from **Heb 10:1-39**. This portion is dealing with a saved man who will be chastened by God if he willfully sins. He will be judged by the law that he despised and, if necessary, be killed physically (**1 John 5:16**). These Hebrews were losing confidence and slipping in their walk for Christ, and Paul is warning them. The verses that indicate that this portion refers to a saved man are: **vs.26** – “received”; **vs.29** - “he was sanctified”; **vs.30** - “his people”. The portion of “...there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin” is referring to **verses 10:10-14**. This means that Christ is offered only once for all sin, not time and time again like the Old Testament sacrifices which could never take away sin. Your willful sin then would be mocking your only provision of salvation - an act that God will judge! Compare **1 Pet 4:17**. Then go back and read **Heb 10:38-39** again.
- **2 Pet 2:20-21** – This is dealing with false prophets. Read in context from the beginning of the chapter. They have escaped the corruption in the world through knowledge but don’t have victory over their lusts. This is indicated in **verse 22** because he refers to them as “dogs” and “pigs” that return to their old ways. True believers are always referred to as “sheep” in the Bible.
- **Jude 21** – “Keeping yourself in the love of God” refers to your heart being established. The love of God never changes toward His children. It is unconditional love that was established by His foresight before the foundation of the world.
- **Rev 3:5; 22:18-19** - The (Lamb’s) Book of Life contains the name of every living man. When a man dies without Christ, his name is then blotted out of the book of life. Compare with several Old Testament portions (**Exo 32:33; Psa 69:28; Deu 9:14**). This wonderful truth demonstrates the grace of God toward mankind in that all could be saved if they only chose to be. There are certain apostates and renegades that are blotted out early or not written at all with no hope of salvation. For example, they that tamper with the Bible or love the Beast. Compare **Rev 13:8; 17:8; 20:11-15; 21:27**.

CONCLUSION:

Eternal salvation is a wonderful truth on which to cleave (**1 Thes 5:21**). It not only gives you hope for your future but establishes confidence to witness to others. You can rest assured that you are presenting a genuine gift of hope for any man. If that man truly calls on the name of the Lord Jesus with a sincere heart and trusts in His blood, he will be delivered for eternity (**Rom 10:9-13; Rom 5:8-9**). What a glorious truth to share with men! It is not one of doubts and fears that would have you saved today if you believe, and lost tomorrow if you sin. But a truth that puts confidence in the blood of Christ, God’s righteousness, which never loses its power to save! No doubt, some children of Israel in Egypt were fearful that the blood on the lentil and doorposts would not stop the plague of death. Though they feared inside the house, the blood did not fail. It still turned away the judgment of God (**Exo 12**). Therefore, go forth with great confidence in Jesus’ name and tell the world of a Saviour who can save to the uttermost! (**Heb 7:25**)