



Are you confident of your place in heaven?

John 10:27-28

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Are you confident of your place in heaven? Or do you worry that you might somehow sin and thereby lose your salvation? As a Christian, you can be sure of the permanence of your salvation. Eternal security is the work of God that guarantees this gift—once received, it cannot be lost. Many people associate the concept with specific denominations, but eternal security is a biblical principle. It is a truth that will set people free from the anxiety of wondering if they have been good enough to enter the Kingdom of God.



I have not always understood eternal security. I can remember kneeling by my bed at night as a teenager and confessing sin. To this day I recall how it felt to think that according to what I had been taught, I was no longer saved until making that confession. The church in which I was raised preached that it was possible to lose one's salvation, and I armed myself with verses to defend that position. As I studied the Word of God and read some of those key verses in context, my argument began to crumble. Finally, I realized it was impossible to reconcile my belief that we are saved by faith alone with my ideas about losing salvation. Once I understood that eternal security was true, all I wanted to do was praise and thank the Lord—I no longer needed to worry about keeping my salvation.

Eternal security guarantees us that salvation is forever. Doubts concerning a permanent place in heaven often spring from a misunderstanding of what Scripture actually teaches. If sin were solely equated with our actions, rescue from a lost condition would depend upon correcting our behavior. We would strive to maintain acceptable conduct in order to satisfy God and consequently preserve our place in heaven. But this constant effort to please Him misses the point of true salvation.

Our basic sin problem is not one of behavior, but condition. We were born with a sinful nature that was turned away from God. In our natural state, it is normal to rebel against Him and live in a self-centered fashion. We are helpless to correct this—we can change behavior but not nature—and as long as our condition is unholy, we are unacceptable to a holy God. But thankfully, He made provision for us by sending His Son to die, bearing the full penalty for all of our sins—past, present, and future. Since our sin problem is a matter of condition, no amount of good behavior will save us. When we receive the gift of Jesus Christ as our Savior, He comes into our life and makes us a new creation with a new nature. **(2 Corinthians 5:17)** Once our condition is changed through receiving Christ, God seals us for eternal life, regardless of any potential future sins.

Jesus promised our eternal security when He told the religious leaders of His day, **“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand” (John 10:27-28).** He said His sheep will never perish—what more could He say to persuade His listeners that what He offers cannot be lost? Notice that He did not say, “No one will snatch them out of My hand unless, if, or but . . .” Instead, Jesus’ words clearly remind us of God’s might—His children cannot be taken from Him because omniscience cannot be surprised and omnipotence cannot be overpowered. No sneak attack by Satan to tempt us into sin can ever be so successful that we are plucked from God’s grasp.

Sometimes people will say, “I hope I can hold on” when a crisis of faith arises. Truthfully, there is nothing for you to hold on to because the omnipotent hand of a loving Father has you in His grip—your letting go of God is irrelevant. In other words, we cannot walk away from God and voluntarily forfeit our salvation. Any motivation to doubt or reject God is from Satan. It is his objective to cause people to sin against the Lord. He attempts this in several ways: by convincing believers they can make it alone; by suggesting life will be easier if they are free from obedience to the Father; or by tricking us into believing our salvation is in jeopardy. Certainly the Enemy cannot force us to do anything—rejecting God is like any other sin in that it involves our choice. However, no sin can separate us from God after we are saved, because we are made righteous by the blood of Jesus and have been sealed by the Holy Spirit for eternity.

To validate the idea that believers

could lose salvation would require two false concepts to be true: **first, it would mean that Jesus made a promise of eternal life which He could not fulfill; and second, to be saved and then lost again would demonstrate that there is a power in the world greater than God.** Both the Old and New Testaments clearly establish God as the preeminent Power in the universe, who is specifically and fully capable of providing our eternal security. **“Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25).**

Jesus guarantees eternal life, and He secures it through our salvation and His continuing act of intercession—going to the Father on behalf of each believer when he or she sins. References to Christ as intercessor are found throughout the New Testament, where He is described as seated at God’s right hand. **(Romans 8:34, Hebrews 10:12, 1 John 2:1)** He knows each failure, fault, and moment of unbelief that we experience, but when Satan accuses us of our sin before God, Jesus is right there to declare our righteousness on the basis of His blood sacrifice. Our entire sin-debt was placed upon Him, and we cannot be tried in God’s court for sins whose atonement has been paid. We have been justified—in other words, we are declared no longer guilty. Not a single scripture indicates that justification is temporary. Instead, Jesus prays for us the same prayer He pronounced over His disciples: **“I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as**

We are . . . I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one” (John 17:11,15).

The Holy Spirit’s indwelling presence within each believer is the Father’s seal of eternal security. In ancient times, a seal was significant in several ways. **First**, it proved authenticity. In giving the Holy Spirit to us, God substantiates the reality of our salvation by grace. **“In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise” (Ephesians 1:13).**

Second, a seal shows ownership, so the presence of the Holy Spirit confirms that we are not our own. **(1 Corinthians 6:19)** The rights of self are given up in favor of redemption and servanthood to Christ. Most importantly, the authority behind any document was signified by the seal placed upon it. We are urged not to grieve the Holy Spirit, but despite our actions, the seal is firmly affixed, based on the authority of the Father. **(Ephesians 4:30)**

Do you realize that God knew you would fail and sin repeatedly, but He saved you anyway? No one can condemn God’s children, but that does not mean we are free from temptation. Some people worry that the promise of eternal security will be interpreted as a license to sin and disregard the consequences. As a believer, you cannot get away with living in sin. The Bible says that although your life will be saved, your heavenly reward will be lost. **(1 Corinthians 3:11-15)** You will not lose your salvation, but there is still much to lose by sinful living. Truthfully, to fret that someone might misuse eternal security as an

excuse for sinning shows a wrong focus—there is far greater likelihood that a believer will be motivated to obey God and follow His commands. The more we understand about the Cross, the stronger our love for Jesus Christ grows.

Performance is not the foundation of God's redemptive plan; faith is. Eternal security is yours by telling God, "Father, I recognize that I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus Christ died for all my sins at Calvary, and today I place my faith in Him as my personal Savior." Once you receive Christ, you are eternally secure in His love—you are guaranteed a place in the paradise He is preparing for believers. The promise of Easter is fulfilled!



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