

# THOUGHTS ON ETERNAL SECURITY

(Once Saved, Always Saved)

by C. Warren Andreasen

The Christian Church has divided, holding dear many different truths. We all worship the same Christ, yet different groups hold close to some special interpretation of some point or other. While God will use all of the branches of the vine to bare fruit, we should never cease seeking the truth of God's Word, and to this effect I present the following scripture to help shed some light on the subject, which is referred to as "Eternal Security" or "Once Saved, Always Saved." As you read this, remember that God never changes, He is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8), thus a truth found in the Old Testament is valid when applied to the modern day. The approach I will take here is from the viewpoint of showing why I cannot accept the idea that once a person is saved that he cannot reject Christ at some later time and fall away. I point out that I do not believe this point matters to anyone other than a person who has claimed salvation, then wishes to continue to live in, or return to a life of sin. You may wish to debate the point that this person was never really saved, but I will not do so because this argument cannot be resolved. If you never fall from salvation, if it is possible, or not, matters little. If you never accept salvation, then it does not matter to you. Eternal Security only matters to someone who claims salvation but has never left, or returns to a life of sin.

A brief recap of Eternal Security would be: Once you accept Christ as your Saviour, you can never lose this salvation, no matter what you do. The opposing view is: Once you accept Christ as your Saviour, no power in heaven, hell, or earth can pull you away, however continued salvation depends on continued following and obedience to God. If you chose to reject, or neglect to tend to your spiritual garden, your salvation will die and you will fall away from Christ.

### **Ezekiel 18:21-23 (NIV)**

*"But if a wicked man turns away from all the sins he has committed and keeps all my decrees and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die. None of the offenses he has committed will be remembered against him. Because of the righteous he has done, he will live. Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? Declares the Sovereign Lord. Rather, I am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?"*

*"But if a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin and does the same detestable things the wicked man does, will he live? None of the righteous things he has done will be remembered. Because of the unfaithfulness he is guilty of and because of the sins he has committed, he will die."*

*"Yet you say 'the way of the Lord is not just.' Hear, O house of Israel: Is my way unjust? Is it not your ways that are unjust? If a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits sin, he will die for it; But if a wicked man turns away from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he will save his life. Because he considers all the offense he has committed and turns away from them, he will surely live; he will not die. Yet the house of Israel says, "the way of the Lord is not just." Are my ways unjust, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are unjust?"*

*"Therefore, O house of Israel, I will judge you, each one according to his ways, declares the Sovereign Lord, Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, O house of*

*Israel? For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord, Repent and live!"*

It is clear in this passage that if a person turns away from their salvation, it would be unjust for him to receive the reward of the just. God is just!

### **Ezekiel 33: 12-20**

*"Therefore, son of man, say to your countrymen, 'The righteousness of the righteous man will not save him when he disobeys, and the wickedness of the wicked man will not cause him to fall when he turns from it. The righteous man, if he sins will not be allowed to live because of his former righteousness,' if I tell the righteous man that he will surely live, but then he trusts in his righteousness and does evil, none of the righteous things he has done will be remembered; he will die for the evil he has done, and if I say to the wicked man, 'you will surely die,' but he then turns away from his sin and does what is just and right -if he gives back what he took in pledge for a loan, returns what he has stolen, follows the decrees that give life, and does no evil, he will surely live; he will not die. None of the sins he has committed will be remembered against him, he has done what is just and right; he will surely live."*

*"Yet your countrymen say, 'the way of the Lord is not just.' But it is their way that is not just, if a righteous man turns from his righteousness and does evil, he will die for it, and if a wicked man turns away from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he will live by doing so, yet, O house of Israel, you say 'The way of the Lord is not just.' But I will judge each of you according to his own way*

I feel I could stop here as the Word speaks so plainly, and the sense of justice that God has placed within me says, "this is just, and anything else would be unjust." But let us continue into the New Testament and look at some selected verses on the subject.

### **Matthew 7:21-23**

*"The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."*

The context of this verse is referring to the 'Children of Abraham', or the Jewish people as God's people but the point is; if God will not spare his own chosen people, why would he spare a Christian who will not follow the ways of Christ?

### **Matthew 7:21-23**

*"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. A way from me, you evildoers.'"*

The point here is that claiming to be a Christian is not enough.

### **Luke 21: 18-19**

*"But not a hair of your head will perish. By standing firm you will save yourselves. "*

This may seem to support the idea of 'eternal security' but you must flip the coin. The other side says; if you do not stand firm, you can, and will fall away and be lost.

### **John 15:10**

*"If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in His love." (Jesus is speaking)*

The key word here is 'REMAIN'. Jesus says that if you obey his commands you will REMAIN in his love. To remain you must first be there... to not remain must then mean to fall out of his love by not actively obeying his commands.

### **Romans 11: 17-22**

*"If some of the branches have been broken off and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not boast over these branches, if you do, consider this: you do not support the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, "branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid, for if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either. Consider therefore the kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness, otherwise, you also will be cut off."*

Notice that again, God did not spare his own people, and the warning to us that we Likewise will be cut off if we do not CONTINUE in His kindness. It seems clear that Salvation is conditional on continued obedience, not on some point of law that saves us forever, no matter what we do.

#### **Galatians 5:4**

*"You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace."*

"There it is again, to fall away from grace, you must first have received that grace, else wise how can you fall from it? In saying "once I have accepted salvation, there is a LAW that says I cannot lose this salvation" then am I not trying to be justified by the law?"

#### **Galatians 6: 7-8**

*"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life."*

Accepting Christ is not enough, you reap what you sow. If you accept Christ but continue to live to the world, you will reap destruction.

#### **1 Corinthians 10:21**

*"You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's Table and the table of demons."*

Simply put, if you do not live for Christ, and share in his sufferings, you cannot share in His Glory

### **Hebrews 3:6**

*"But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast."*

Note here the conditional promise of "IF we HOLD ON". If we do not continue, or hold on, then we will lose the promise, or fall away.

### **Hebrews 6:4-6**

*"It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted of the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the Word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they FALL AWAY, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting Him to public disgrace. If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only the fearful expectation of judgment and raging fire that will consume the enemies of God."*

These are tough words and it makes no mistake. Once you have tasted of the fullness of Christ, you CAN fall away, and it is a terrible thing. This person either will not, or cannot come back. I believe that this is the one unforgivable sin... to know the fullness of Christ and the Holy Spirit... to know God's Word, and to knowingly throw it away. This blasphemes the Holy Spirit.

### **Hebrews 10: 26-27**

*"If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only the*

*fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God."*

### **Hebrews 10:29**

*"How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?"*

If a man were to accept salvation then deliberately keep on living in sin he would be trampling the Son of God under foot. Salvation is given when a person asks but it will not continue or maintain if the person deliberately keeps on sinning.

### **Hebrews 10:35-36**

*"So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised."*

### **Hebrews 10:39**

*"But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved."*

Once more we see the theme of perseverance and not shrinking back. If there is such a thing as 'eternal security' why would the Holy Spirit continue to warn us about how to live? Why spend the time to teaching people to live for Christ? Once a person accepts Christ we should be able to move on, if the rest does not affect the person's salvation.



## **2 Peter 1:10-11**

*"Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."*

This section is referring to adding to your faith the various attributes (fruits) of the Spirit. It says that if you do not seek these things, there is a danger of falling away.

## **2 Peter 2:20-21"**

*If they have escaped the corruption of the world but knowing our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way to righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred commandment that was passed on to them."*

Here judgment is being referred to. Judgment will be more severe for those who fall away, than those who never knew Christ. This would have no meaning if it were impossible to fall away.

## **2 Peter 3:17**

*". . . be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ..."*

## Revelation 2:5

*"To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God." "He who overcomes will not be hurt at all by the second death."*

*"To him who overcomes and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations."*

*"Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, a time will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you."*

*"Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white; I will never erase his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels. He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*

For a name to be "Erased from the Book of Life", it must first be in the Book of Life.