

Eternal Security - Ten Biblical Proofs

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Chapter 1 - A Child of God, Eternally

Eternal Security is a theological term that refers to the doctrine that no believer in Christ will ever later be lost, and ultimately wind up in Hell when they die. Stated positively, it's the doctrine that every believer will go to Heaven when they die, irrespective of what takes place in the time between when they believe and when they die.

The first proof for the fact that any believer in Jesus Christ is eternally secure is the doctrine of the new birth.

Jesus Christ said in John 3, that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). As a result, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7).

According to Scripture, the new birth takes place when a person believes in Jesus:

1 John 5:1

1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

Galatians 3:26

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

John 1:12-13

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Prior to the new birth, a person is not a child of God, but instead a child of Adam (1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 15:45-49), which the Lord also calls a "child of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:2, 5:6, Colossians 3:6), a "child of wrath" (Ephesians 2:3), and in some cases, a "child of the Devil" (Acts 13:10, John 8:44, 1 John 3:10, Matthew 13:38), or "child of Hell" (Matthew 23:15).

All of this changes when someone puts their faith in Christ as their Savior, which regenerates their spirit, and places them into the family of God. Every believer, therefore, has been "begotten again" (1 Peter 1:3), that is, born again.

This new birth is born of "incorruptible seed", and "cannot sin":

1 Peter 1:23

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

1 John 3:9

9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he **cannot sin**, because he is born of God.

1 John 5:18

18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, **all things** are become new.

Therefore, the new nature that is born again upon faith in Christ is as perfect as Jesus Christ Himself. It is utterly incapable of doing anything displeasing to God. When we die, this is all that will remain, which is why we will never have to worry about sinning in Heaven.

However, while you remain on earth, you still have the corrupt body of flesh that is a remnant of your first birth. These two natures fight for dominance within every believer:

Galatians 5:16-17

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

17 For **the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other:** so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Your flesh has not been redeemed yet - "the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:23) is something that will take place in the future. Until you die, you will still have the same brain of flesh, the same arms, legs, and so on, that you had prior to Salvation, which is still born after the sin nature. That means that any Christian is capable of doing any sin that an unsaved person can commit, as you have the same corrupt flesh that they have, born after Adam.

This constant conflict between the two natures requires a daily struggle, which explains the repeated exhortations in Scripture to walk in the new nature, for example:

Ephesians 4:22-24

22 That ye **put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;**

23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

24 And that ye **put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.**

Romans 6:6, 6:11

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The fact that we have to be commanded to walk in the new man proves that it is not automatic, or guaranteed. If it were, these commandments, which together constitute hundreds of passages in the New Testament, would be unnecessary.

It takes effort - a lot of effort - to walk in the new man. If the Holy Spirit alone ever made us do so, He would do so all the time, and we would all be perfect. He would not play a game with our mental health by forcing us to walk in the new man sometimes, and then other times, leave us to sin. The limiting factor in a Christian's behavior, then, is the

individual Christian's own submission to walking in the new man. As such, it's a faulty basis for assurance of having the new birth.

This struggle is difficult, lifelong, and because we are the limiting factor, fraught with failure. Even the best among us fail continuously to walk in the new man, with the greatest Christian to ever live, the Apostle Paul, describing his own constant failures in Romans 7:14 - Romans 8:16. This, in part, reads:

Romans 7:14-24

14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 **For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing:** for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 **For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:**

23 **But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.**

24 **O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?**

Above is the quintessential example of the two natures at play - the frustration of having the spiritual struggling against the carnal.

The old birth though, with its sins and failures, cannot affect, or corrupt, or nullify the new birth. Recall that the new birth is "incorruptible", and "cannot sin". No action by the old nature can ever change that.

Being a child of God also means, both logically and Biblically, that you are a sibling of Jesus Christ, who was "the firstborn among many brethren" (Romans 8:29). Someone who is a literal brother or sister of Jesus Christ is known by Jesus Christ, which is why the Bible says "the Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Timothy 2:19), and we "are known of God" (Galatians 4:9). In the Gospel of John, Christ says that "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (John 10:14), and then goes on to define His "sheep" as believers (John 10:26).

Why is this significant? Because the Lord tells us what He will say to the lost at the Last Judgment:

Matthew 7:21-23

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew you:** depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

If someone goes to Hell, it's not because Jesus once knew them, and they lost their Salvation. It's because, as the Lord says, He "never" knew them. It would make no sense at

all, and would be false, if the Lord were to say this about someone that was at any point a sibling of His, in the family of God.

And notice, in the passage, those who enter the Kingdom of Heaven are those who did the “will of the Father”. The Father’s will is elucidated in John chapter 6:

John 6:39-40

39 **And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing**, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 **And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.**

Above, we see that all believers have done the “will of the Father”, because the will of the Father is that not a single believer in Christ will ever be lost.

Therefore, all those that have the new birth, by virtue of the fact that they have done “the will of the Father”, are known of God, and will never be told to depart from Him on the day of judgment.

The first reason, then, that a believer can never be lost, is that they have an incorruptible, sinless part of them, which is as perfect as Jesus Christ. The part of a Christian that is even capable of sinning is merely a remnant of their first birth, which has no bearing whatsoever on their new birth. Every believer is known of God as a child of His, and is secure in that relationship by an unalterable act of God - the new birth that takes place at the instant someone decides to put their faith in Jesus, instead of themselves, to get them to Heaven.

Chapter 2 - Sealed with the Holy Spirit

The second proof that every believer is eternally secure involves the fact that at the moment of faith, we are sealed with the indwelling of God Himself, the Holy Spirit:

Ephesians 1:12-14

12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

13 **In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,**

14 **Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession,** unto the praise of his glory.

Above, we are given the standard order of events that take place when a receptive person hears the Gospel. After hearing the Gospel, they believe it - their trust is put in Christ, and they immediately receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, as Galatians 3:2 and John 7:39 also attest to.

This indwelling is called “the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession”. This is significant for a number of reasons.

Firstly, it shows that we are sealed until a fixed point in time - “until the redemption of the purchased possession” - which takes place after our death. This can be demonstrated by looking at the fact that our bodies are included in the “purchased possession” that the verse refers to:

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

19 What? **know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you,** which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 **For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body,** and in your spirit, which are God's.

The purchase of our body, soul, and spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:23), has already been made with the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). However, the redemption of that purchased possession in full, which includes the body, will take place in the future, after our earthly bodies die, and we receive a glorified body:

Romans 8:23

23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.**

Therefore, a promise of being sealed “until the redemption of the purchased possession” is a guarantee of being sealed until a point after our earthly death, which, of course, includes our entire lives.

Secondly, the passage Ephesians 1:12-14 shows us that our heavenly “inheritance” in Christ is guaranteed, which finds a nice parallel in a passage from First Peter chapter one:

1 Peter 1:3-5

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Our heavenly inheritance is reserved for us, and God gives us the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as the “earnest”, which is as if to say “down payment”, of this fact. This inheritance is fixed, and the Holy Spirit is “sealed” in us until the moment we are completely redeemed. At that point, it will be too late to lose your Salvation anyway, because you will be in a sinless body to match your sinless new nature (see Chapter 1).

The Bible is replete with statements that affirm that every single believer is indwelt by, and sealed with, the Holy Spirit Himself:

2 Corinthians 1:21-22

21 Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

22 Who hath also **sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.**

Ephesians 4:30

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, **whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.**

2 Timothy 1:14

14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by **the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.**

Romans 5:5

5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by **the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.**

Romans 8:9

9 But ye are not in the flesh, **but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.** Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

2 Corinthians 5:5

5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, **who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.**

1 Corinthians 3:16-17

16 Know ye not that **ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?**

17 **If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy;** for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

The last passage above, in particular, demonstrates an important truth. Since all of God's children are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, He takes their sins seriously. To this end, the Bible says "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Hebrews 12:6, also Revelation 3:19, Proverbs 3:11-12, etc.).

This chastisement can include losing various blessings or possessions in this life, along with various forms of "the destruction of the flesh" (1 Corinthians 5:5). This would include incurring illness, and even death, as is what happened to the church at Corinth when they blasphemed the Lord's Supper:

1 Corinthians 11:29-32

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this cause **many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.**

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 **But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.**

So, while we are guaranteed the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, God does not cease to be a righteous judge with His children, here on earth. If you misbehave, God doesn't send you to Hell - He chastens you here in this life. This is one of the motivations given to a believer for living a godly life, despite the fact that nothing you do, and no sin you commit, can cause you to lose your Salvation.

In summary, God's promise that every believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit until a fixed point in time is a powerful proof that each believer is eternally secure. They are indwelt by God Himself until a point in time when they will be physically incapable of ever sinning again - when they have a redeemed body, and are living with Christ and all the saints in the new creation.

Chapter 3 - Justification Without the Law

To begin this discussion on the Law, it should be noted that Christ fulfilled the Law (Matthew 5:17) by keeping it perfectly (Hebrews 4:15), and therefore parts of it have been changed in the New Covenant (Hebrews 7:12). One category that has been done away with are the "carnal ordinances" that had been imposed until Christ came (Hebrews 9:10-11, Colossians 2:13-17), which served to set apart the physical nation of Israel from their neighbors as a "peculiar people" (Deuteronomy 14:2) - dietary restrictions, clothing requirements, and so on. Also done away with are those things that pictured or found their fulfillment in Jesus Christ - the animal sacrifices, the Sabbath, observing certain holidays, the Levitical priesthood, and so on.

The moral Law has remained untouched, however, in the sense that God still expects one not to murder, steal, lust, commit idolatry, and so on - all things commanded in the Law. That is to say, the Law has been changed from the Old Testament, but definitely not abolished.

Even after Christ's resurrection and ascension, the Law of God is still the standard by which "sin" is defined, because sin, by definition, is breaking the Law:

1 John 3:4

4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for **sin is the transgression of the law.**

Romans 7:7

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, **I had not known sin, but by the law:** for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

Therefore, since all sin breaks the Law, keeping the Law would require being sinlessly perfect. As a corollary, any commandment to avoid, or turn from, any sin, is a commandment to keep the Law.

This can further be demonstrated by the fact that "sin" is said to include anything unrighteous:

1 John 5:17

17 **All unrighteousness is sin:** and there is a sin not unto death.

Since "all unrighteousness is sin", and "sin is the transgression of the Law", that means that anything that can be called "unrighteous" is also a violation of the Law.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, failure to actively do good things is also a sin, and therefore a transgression of the Law:

James 4:17

17 Therefore **to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.**

So, we see that the Law is not just avoiding that which is bad, but also a mandate to actively do good things. We get further insight into what the Law encompasses by looking at the words of Jesus Christ, when He said:

Matthew 22:37-40

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 On these two commandments hang all **the law** and the prophets.

Here, Jesus summarizes the Law into two great commandments - loving God and neighbor entirely. Both of these are direct quotations from the Old Testament Law (Deuteronomy 6:5, Leviticus 19:15-18). The Law, then, encompasses any good thing that you do, whether for others or for God.

Elsewhere, Jesus further distilled the Law into a single commandment:

Matthew 7:12

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is **the law** and the prophets.

Once again, anything conceivably "good" that a person can do falls under the above verse, which Jesus says encapsulates the entire Law.

These passages are sufficient to show that doing any good deed, along with any avoidance of performing any bad deed, falls under the scope of the Law, according to the Word of God.

However, the Lord says, almost to the point of redundancy, that a person cannot be justified in the sight of God by the Law:

Romans 3:19-20

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20 Therefore **by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight:** for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Galatians 3:11

11 But that **no man is justified by the law in the sight of God**, it is evident: for, **The just shall live by faith.**

Galatians 3:21-25

21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for **if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.**

22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

24 Wherefore **the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.**

25 **But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.**

Galatians 2:16

16 **Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for **by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**

Galatians 2:21

21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: **for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.**

Acts 13:39

39 And **by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.**

Romans 3:21-22, 28

21 But now **the righteousness of God without the law** is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even **the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe:** for there is no difference:

28 Therefore **we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.**

Romans 9:31-32

31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

32 Wherefore? **Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.** For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

Notice that almost all of the verses above explicitly say that we are justified by faith to the exclusion of the Law. There is no mixing of the concepts, because they are diametrically opposed.

If one were to mandate obedience to the smallest part of the Law for justification, in addition to faith, then they have incurred an obligation to keep every last part of the Law:

Galatians 3:10

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in **all** things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Galatians 5:1-5

1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, **that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.**

3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that **he is a debtor to do the whole law.**

4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

Justification by the Law is an all-or-nothing situation. One either keeps the Law perfectly, and is justified by the Law (Romans 2:13), or they have transgressed the Law, and are therefore lawbreakers:

James 2:10

10 For **whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.**

Those who seek to be justified by works always lower this God-given perfect standard into a hazy, unclear one, wherein they teach that God requires some ill-defined, mysterious, imperfect amount of obedience to the Law, in order to be saved. Not so. As these verses demonstrate, justification by the Law demands utterly perfect obedience.

However, not only has everyone broken the Law in their past, but everyone also continuously breaks the Law, on an ongoing basis. Recall that "sin is the transgression of the Law":

Romans 3:23

23 **For all have sinned**, and come short of the glory of God;

1 John 1:8, 10

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Adding to the fact that every person is a sinner, the Lord also makes clear that each person sins to the extent that He does not consider any of them "good" or "righteous":

Romans 3:10-12

10 As it is written, **There is none righteous, no, not one:**

11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; **there is none that doeth good, no, not one.**

Ecclesiastes 7:20

20 For **there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.**

Psalms 14:2-3

2 The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.

3 They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: **there is none that doeth good, no, not one.**

This is why no one can be justified by the Law. All have "offended in one point", innumerable times, and are therefore "guilty of all". Therefore, faith in Christ is the one

lifeline that God provides to mankind to be justified, despite our constant breaking of the Law.

But it's important to slow down and consider that justification before God by faith to the exclusion of the Law is a powerful argument for Eternal Security, given that one understands the scope of the Law. As the first section of this chapter discussed, the Law includes any conceivably good thing that a person can do, and also includes avoiding doing any conceivably bad thing that a person can do, because it is the very standard of righteousness.

This, combined with the fact that we are justified by faith to the exclusion of the Law, is a powerful proof that nothing bad that we do, and no failure of ours to do good, can ever affect our justification. Our behavior cannot affect our justification, because if it did, then it would mean that we are, at least in part, justified by the Law.

As believers in Christ, the basis for our righteousness before God is never personal to us. Rather, our standing before God is based on the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which was imputed to us when we believed in Jesus:

Romans 3:21-22

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

Romans 4:4-8

4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, **his faith is counted for righteousness.**

6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Please take a moment to understand the implications of the above passages, because they are demonstrative of such an important doctrine in Scripture. Believers are given the perfect righteousness of God "without works", and our sins are not imputed to us. This satisfies God's demand for utter perfection, in a way that personal righteousness obtained by living in inevitably-imperfect obedience to the Law never can. And, since that perfect righteousness is not rooted in our obedience to the Law, disobeying the Law by sinning can never affect our justification.

Spurning this perfect, imputed righteousness of God, in favor of an attempt at self-justification by obedience to the Law, is condemned explicitly in Scripture:

Romans 10:3-4

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Philippians 3:9

9 And be found in him, **not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ**, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

If you have believed in Jesus Christ, then in the sight of God, you are as righteous as Jesus Christ Himself, because you have been given His righteousness. Nothing can change that, because that righteousness was not obtained by obedience to the Law in the first place.

Therefore, those who teach that a believer can lose their Salvation demonstrate that they do not understand the basis for our justification, and probably don't understand the scope of the Law either. Such are trying to mandate some undefined level of obedience to a Law that cannot justify them, which they themselves don't keep, and no one has ever kept, except Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, you will notice that such will always fail to define the extent to which a person has to obey Christ, or turn from sin, in order to not lose their Salvation - or "prove they were never saved" - which is just a semantic way of arriving at the same point. Typically they will decry that they are teaching sinless perfectionism, even though, Biblically, if any obedience to the Law is required, perfect obedience is required, because as shown above, justification by the Law is binary. You either keep all of it perfectly, or you lose. That is the situation that God has created - it forces you to either accept the Savior He provides, or face damnation (John 3:36, 3:18, 8:24, 14:6, 1 John 5:12, etc.).

Contrary to this, any believer can take comfort in the fact that the basis for their justification is immovable. It does not depend on their willpower, or submission to work in the will of God. It does not depend on their obedience to a Law that was only given to mankind to show them their need for a savior (Galatians 3:19, 3:22-24, Romans 3:19-20). Instead of being based on some relative level of righteousness compared with other human beings, our justification is based on the fact that every believer has the righteousness of God Himself imputed to them, by virtue of their faith in Jesus Christ.

Chapter 4 - Eternal Life as a Present Possession

Another proof for the doctrine of Eternal Security is the fact that Eternal Life is not something that a person needs to wait until after they die to receive. In the Word of God, Eternal Life is frequently spoken of as the present possession of believers:

John 6:47

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.**

John 3:36

36 **He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life:** and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

A believer in Jesus, according to Himself, has, right now, Everlasting Life. If any believer ever lost that designation, then the term “everlasting” was deceptive and false, because it did not last forever.

Not only is Eternal Life referred to as a present possession, but it is something that God explicitly wants us to know that we have, and be confident in this fact:

1 John 5:13

13 **These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life,** and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

Above, the Apostle John says that the reason he’s writing what he wrote is so that any believer in Christ can know that they have - present tense - Eternal Life. This is only possible if belief in Jesus is something that happens in a moment in time, and is an event someone can look back on, and know that it has taken place.

This point matters, because it refutes the frequent, confusing attempts to redefine “believe” or “faith” to mean “commitment to obeying Jesus for one’s entire life”. If that were the case, it would be impossible for anyone to “know that (they) have Eternal Life” at any point before their dying breath, which is one reason why redefining faith does not work. Rather, “faith” means “faith”, as the word is plainly used - accepting a proposition as true. In this case, the proposition is that one is a sinner, who needs a savior, and Jesus alone is that savior. Once someone believes that, their trust is transferred from themselves to Christ, and they are granted Eternal Life by God as an irrevocable present possession.

Being granted Eternal Life coincides with the new birth (see Chapter 1), which is why it is described alongside “being passed from death unto life”:

John 5:24

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, **hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.**

Having been “passed from death unto life” is described as a completed operation - not a lifelong process - and it ensures that in the future, any believer “shall not come into condemnation”. In no future circumstance can a believer be eternally condemned.

This is important because it addresses another objection raised against the simple interpretation of these verses - that they only apply to current believers. Therefore, since one may very well lose faith in the future before they die, as we are warned about elsewhere in the New Testament (Hebrews 3:12, Luke 8:13), the verses are nullified. This verse disproves this assertion, as it states that believers “shall not come into condemnation”, which is a statement about the future.

This would be a meaningless statement if it were possible for a lapsed believer to ultimately wind up being condemned, considering that Jesus already said a believer “is not condemned” in the present tense just a few chapters earlier (John 3:18). Believers are not condemned now, and shall never come into condemnation.

Even if a believer stops believing, they still have the new birth, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which is why the Bible says:

2 Timothy 2:13

13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

Believing false religions, or heresy, is a work of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-20), which as discussed in Chapter 1, any believer is susceptible to. Only a child of God walking in the flesh can become an unbeliever, and that has no bearing whatsoever on the fact that they still have a perfect new nature, which will not, and cannot ever disbelieve, and is immune from any corruption from whatever deeds a believer does later on in the flesh.

In addition to the fact that believers “shall not come into condemnation”, there are other future-oriented statements that Christ made to the effect that no one who has ever had Eternal Life can lose it:

John 10:26-29

26 But **ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep**, as I said unto you.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

28 And **I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.**

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

All of Christ's sheep, who He defines above as believers, are “given” Eternal Life, and “shall never perish”. If in any future circumstance, a single believer “perished”, then this statement would be deceptive, inconsequential, and false, especially considering that not only is a believer “in” Christ's hand, but a part of His hand, being part “of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones” (Ephesians 5:30). The body of Jesus Christ will never be mutilated, which is what would have to happen if a believer ever “perished”.

This same point is stressed in the most famous passage in the Bible:

John 3:15-16

15 That **whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.**

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that **whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**

Other translations use “will not perish” or “shall not perish” in this passage - but the message is the same. Believers have Everlasting Life, and that demands that they will also never perish in any future scenario, so the Lord emphasizes that point too.

The Lord, then, is not being deceptive, or playing word games, when He declares that believers have Eternal Life. Eternal Life is truly their eternal present possession, and the timeframe “eternal” includes all of the time between when a person believes and when they die.

This understanding of Eternal Life as a present possession explains why, in Scripture, we are given clear testimonies of absolute assurance of Salvation, of not only the writers, but also of the writers’ assurance for their audience (1 Peter 1:3-5, Romans 8:38-39):

1 Peter 1:3-5

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

2 Timothy 4:18

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Romans 8:38-39

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, **nor things present, nor things to come,**

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Philippians 1:23

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire **to depart, and to be with Christ;** which is far better:

This assurance is only possible if the basis for a believer having Eternal Life has nothing to do with their actions. If Eternal Life hangs in the balance for a believer based on how they live, these verses would be demonstrating a dangerously false sense of security, as no one knows if they will live a good life in the future, and would also be prideful statements exalting one’s own self. Instead, declarations of assurance are not prideful, because the basis for assurance is totally detached from a believer’s own righteousness.

In summary, every believer has Eternal Life as a present possession, which is why neither “things present, nor things to come” - which includes any conceivable action done by anybody, at any point in time - can separate a believer from the love of God. They have “been passed from death unto life” as a completed operation, “shall not perish”, and “shall not come into condemnation”, and they are supposed to know, and be confident in, these facts.

Logically, if you as a believer could "lose eternal life", then if God loved you at all, He would take you home to Heaven the moment you believed. He wouldn't leave you in a precarious situation for decades, dangling your soul over Hell the whole time. In such a situation, living a long life - something described as a blessing in Scripture (Proverbs 3:2, 3:16) - would be a tremendous curse. The doctrine that someone can "lose eternal life", besides it being self-contradictory and against the dictionary, doesn't even make sense on the most basic logical grounds.

Chapter 5 - Saved by Grace Through Faith, to the Exclusion of Works

The term “Salvation”, or being “saved” in Scripture, when speaking in the eternal sense, refers to being saved from the penalty for your sins - saved from Hell:

Matthew 1:21

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: **for he shall save his people from their sins.**

To begin any discussion on Salvation, it should be noted that the question of what a person must do to be saved by Christ is asked and answered verbatim in Scripture:

Acts 16:30-31

30 And brought them out, and said, **Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**

31 And they said, **Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,** and thy house.

In context, the jailer holding Paul and Silas has just seen a miracle, and it compels him to ask this question. This would have been the perfect time for God to mention water baptism, turning from sin, and so on, if those things were required to be saved. Instead, the answer is “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ”, without mention or regard to anything else.

This teaching is reiterated, and made more explicit by the Apostle Paul later on in the epistles:

Ephesians 2:8-10

8 **For by grace are ye saved through faith;** and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 **Not of works, lest any man should boast.**

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Above, we are plainly told that we are saved by faith to the exclusion of works. What does “works” here refer to? Well, verse 10’s mention of “good works” can reasonably be applied to verse 9’s mention of “works”, especially since these works are something that someone would be expected to be able to “boast” of. Therefore, we are saved by faith without doing good things.

This interpretation is bolstered and argued for more emphatically by the following verse:

Titus 3:5

5 **Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us,** by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

According to the above, we are saved without “works of righteousness”, and the theme of the chapter is “every good work” (Titus 3:1), and “maintaining good works” (Titus 3:8, 3:14) in general. Therefore, the assertion that Ephesians 2:8-9 is teaching that we are saved from Hell without any good works of our own is a valid interpretation, looking at context, and comparing Scripture with Scripture.

This has to be mentioned, because often Ephesians 2:8-9, and all of the verses discussed in this section, will be nullified by preachers as pertaining only to works done with a certain motive, or referring to keeping some abrogated aspect of the Mosaic Law. That is impossible, in context, but since the verses need to be nullified by those who teach a works-based Salvation, something will have to be read into the text that isn't there.

Also notice in Ephesians 2:8 that we are said to be "saved" "by grace". "Grace" can simply be defined as "favor". And, as we can see from the following verse, with respect to Salvation, that favor is entirely unmerited, and defined in opposition to works:

Romans 11:6

6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Grace and works, with respect to Salvation, are in two separate categories, and once works are added to that grace, it is no longer grace. Therefore, works cannot play any role whatsoever in one's Salvation. Salvation is either by grace alone, or by works alone.

Ephesians 2:8-9 is also useful for dispelling the constant attempts to redefine “faith” to mean “commitment to live in obedience to God for the rest of one's life”, since it shows that faith is not a work, nor is it some type of contract that necessitates doing works of righteousness in the future. Rather, faith is the antithesis of works, as the following verse also demonstrates:

Romans 4:5

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth **the ungodly**, his faith is counted for righteousness.

If "faith" was actually doing good works in obedience to God, it would be impossible to be one who "worketh not, but believeth". But this verse, like Ephesians 2:8-9, shows that even faith without works is “counted for righteousness”, and sufficient to save any sinner - even “the ungodly”.

The broad context of Romans 4:5 above is discussing the Law, as in the previous chapter, after a lengthy dissertation on how no one keeps the Law, and must instead be saved by faith, we read:

Romans 3:28

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is **justified by faith without the deeds of the law.**

Given the scope of the Law, which, as discussed in Chapter 3 of this book, includes any action pleasing to God, and avoiding anything displeasing to God, this would be another proof that Salvation is by faith alone. However, the immediate context of Romans 4:5 is Abraham, and his works (Romans 4:1-4).

Abraham lived 500 years before the Law had even been given. Therefore, Romans 4:5 applies to “good works” in general, and is another statement affirming that doing good things has nothing to do with a person’s justification. Even if it were only about the Law, though, as is sometimes asserted in an attempt to nullify it, that would hardly change anything, given what the Law encompasses.

So, what we see in the Word of God are not just statements saying that we are saved or justified by faith, but close-ended statements that say we are saved and justified by faith to the exclusion of doing good things. This clarifies that it is impossible to add various requirements to faith in order to be saved, and also prevents redefining “faith” or “believe” to mean things other than what they plainly mean - accepting that a proposition is true, or as the Bible puts it, “acknowledging the truth” (2 Timothy 2:25, Titus 1:1).

Of course, wolves will not come in wolves' clothing, they come as sheep (Matthew 7:15). Therefore, every teacher of a works-based Salvation will profess to affirm Salvation by “faith”, or by “grace”, but then proceed to mandate some unquantified level of good works if one is “really saved”. No one will ever plainly admit to teaching works Salvation, so don’t expect them to - instead, look beyond the persistent doublespeak to consider the logical conclusions of what they teach.

If without works, one goes to Hell, then works save them. Denying that works save someone in such a circumstance means nothing for that person, practically speaking, as either way they have to do the work. It’s just a semantic game used to pretend that one isn’t teaching works Salvation, while teaching the very same.

This fact is commonly dismissed by teachers of a works-based Salvation under the guise of attributing all of a believer’s good works to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, they reason, telling a believer to look to their own lives for assurance of Salvation, and declaring that without seeing some unquantified, nebulous amount of works, one isn’t saved, and doesn’t actually “believe” in Jesus, is not prideful, or works Salvation, because the Holy Spirit is doing the works.

The problems with this false doctrine abound. Firstly, there are hundreds of commandments given to believers in the New Testament, none of which would be necessary if good behavior was automatic, and didn’t take work on their behalf. The fact that these preachers preach against sin to their congregations is proof that they know very well that behavior depends on a believer’s own will and effort, otherwise, they wouldn’t need to preach about anything, ever.

Secondly, as touched on in Chapter 2, if the Holy Spirit ever made a believer do good without their cooperation and effort, He would do so 100% of the time, at once, and every believer would be sinless. It would not be a little game where the Holy Spirit ensures for every believer some woefully imperfect, undefined baseline of good works, and other times leaves them to sin. God does not play capricious games with the mental health of His children.

Thirdly, looking at one’s own life for assurance can only ever prove that a person isn’t saved. The standard that God demands is perfection (Matthew 5:48), and falling short of that standard, to any degree, leaves boundless room for doubt. The entire purpose of the Law, as covered in Chapter 3, is to show a person how far short of God’s expectations they fall. It’s only by looking at other human beings, or yourself from the past - both meaningless standards defined nowhere in the Bible - that someone could deceive themselves into assurance based on their works or desires. God’s actual standard of perfection will only ever reveal failures.

Furthermore, someone looking at their own lives for assurance can never know whether their good works are a result of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, or just an unregenerate person fulfilling the religious desires innate in every human being (Romans 2:14-15). Belief in Christ is not a prerequisite for doing good things. Billions of unsaved people pray, go to church, study the Bible, and live moral lives. Unsaved billionaires have donated more to charity than the average Christian does in 100 lifetimes. Unsaved nurses volunteer their time, and risk their own health, for good humanitarian causes overseas, and countless unbelievers have worked diligently for their entire lives to improve the lives of others in tangible ways, out of love for them.

Unbelievers frequently quit various sins, because sins have built-in consequences, they simply tire of them, or their God-given conscience convicts them. Many people live wicked lives, get sent to prison, and then clean up their act after leaving, and innumerable drug and alcohol addicts have quit via participation in various rehab programs. Any unbeliever can feel spiritual, do good, or quit doing bad - it proves nothing.

All this to say that looking to one's own works and desires for assurance of Salvation will lead to either pride and self-delusion, or spiritual shipwreck and mental anguish, but in either case, a fundamentally flawed idea that one's behavior can prove or disprove that they are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Every believer with the Holy Spirit in them has the ability to "grieve" the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) and "quench" the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19), meaning that their obedience is a cooperative effort with God. Therefore, not only is it guaranteed to be imperfect, but is also a faulty foundation for assurance, according to God's testimony regarding how a person's works and efforts never have anything to do with their Salvation in the first place.

The only valid foundation for assurance of Salvation can be the promises of Christ regarding those who simply believe in Him. Any other foundation is shifting sand, tainted by mankind.

Resuming a more general discussion on Salvation - someone who "saves" is called a "savior". Not only is Jesus called the Savior many times (the name "Jesus" itself means "Jehovah saves"), but also God makes it clear that there is no savior besides Him:

Philippians 3:20

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for **the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:**

Isaiah 43:11

11 I, even I, am the Lord; and **beside me there is no saviour.**

This second point is reiterated multiple times (Isaiah 45:21, Hosea 13:4), and it shows that God disdains being relegated to some kind of "co-savior".

However, that is precisely what the doctrine that one has to behave and obey to be saved does. It repudiates Christ's position as the only Savior by mandating that a person save themselves in every practical way. If one has to diligently obey God, or else go to Hell, then Christ has been relegated to a cheerleader who merely imparted a bunch of rules to you so that you may or may not save yourself. This turns Jesus into a "savior" in name only, or in some abstract, theoretical way, even though in practicality, we must save ourselves.

This position ignores the entire reason why Christ came to earth in the first place. It was not to tell us how to behave - that was the purpose of the Law (Romans 3:19-20), and

mankind universally failed to keep it. The reason Christ came was to fulfill the Law Himself (Matthew 5:17), which no man could do, die for the sins of mankind, and therefore save them that believe:

Hebrews 2:9

9 But we see Jesus, **who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death**, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

The purpose of Christ coming to earth was to be the Savior to all those that come to Him by faith (John 6:37), not to be a co-savior, and not a “savior” in name only.

In conclusion, the teaching that someone can lose their Salvation necessarily teaches an entirely works-based Salvation, with oneself as their own savior, because if the bad works that you do, or the good works that you fail to do, can make you lose your Salvation, then works are the sole determining factor in whether or not someone gets to Heaven. Attributing these Salvation-required works to only the Holy Spirit is both Biblically and logically impossible, and is just one of the many pseudo-humble ways of teaching Salvation by works.

In contrast, not only is Salvation by faith alone, plus nothing, taught clearly in the Word of God, it also is the only position that glorifies God completely, rather than diminishing Christ’s status as Savior by setting up oneself as co-savior, regardless of how fiercely those that do so deny that’s what they are doing. Salvation by faith alone is not only the Biblical position, but the humble position that breeds genuine gratefulness and love for God and Jesus Christ, and keeps Christ in His proper exalted place.

Chapter 6 - Eternal Life as the Gift of God

Yet another strong proof for the doctrine of Eternal Security is the fact that God calls Eternal Life a “gift”:

Romans 6:23

23 For the wages of sin is death; but **the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

A gift is not something that one has to work diligently for. It is not something that must be purchased with arduous obedience throughout the course of years and decades. A gift is something given for free, to keep.

If there are stipulations for the one who accepts the gift, it has ceased to be a gift. Rather, it has now become a “contract”, with a “reward”, or “payment” upon completion of the terms. A person, by accepting a gift, cannot be obligated to repay the giver, else the gift was given under false pretenses, and cannot rightly be called a gift in the first place.

But, how do we know that when the Bible says “gift”, it refers to what we would think of as a gift?

Well, as another mention of “gift” in Scripture demonstrates, the gift of Salvation is explicitly contrasted with “works” by the Lord, which as demonstrated in Chapter 5, refers to good works in general:

Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: **it is the gift of God:**

9 **Not of works**, lest any man should boast.

This establishes the “gift” as a gift as we would think of it - something not obtained by effort, or work, or payment, but rather given without cost, to any who would receive it.

Further still, the gift of God is even called a “free gift”, as if to redundantly state that it is truly a gift - as if God anticipated the impossible position that most of mankind would adopt, where a “gift” would become something that people were told they had to work their entire lives for:

Romans 5:15-18

15 But not as the offence, so also is **the free gift**. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and **the gift by grace**, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is **the gift**: for the judgement was by one to condemnation, but **the free gift** is of many offences unto justification.

17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of **the gift of righteousness** shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgement came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one **the free gift** upon all men unto justification of life.

Over and over again above - six times in four verses - God tells us that justification, and the righteousness of God Himself, is a gift, and it is free.

This position is repudiated by almost all branches of professing Christianity, which have created fantastically convoluted ways of theologically obscuring the fact that they teach their followers that what the Lord calls a "free gift", must in reality be obtained through a perilous, lifelong struggle, with Hell as consolation if they fail. A free gift, indeed?

In contrast, the Lord shows Himself in the Bible as standing at the source of a fountain of Everlasting Life, inviting all to come and drink freely and without cost:

John 4:10

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest **the gift of God**, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and **he would have given thee living water.**

Revelation 22:17

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. **And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.**

The "gift" of the "water of life" is offered "freely", which is the same thing said of our redemption and justification elsewhere:

Romans 3:24

24 Being **justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:**

The only way that the gift can be said to be offered "freely" is if the price is entirely paid by God, and accepting it takes no effort. If accepting the gift in reality required an indirect "payment" of behaving to some undefined extent for the rest of your life, it would be disingenuous and meaningless to call it a "gift" at all, and almost comically false to pretend that it's offered "freely" in such a circumstance.

Further studying what the Word of God has to say about gifts, it is plainly stated that God's gifts are not something that will ever be snatched back later:

Romans 11:28-29

28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes.

29 For **the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.**

Above, the term "without repentance" is an archaic way of saying "irrevocable", which is how most translations render the verse. The context of the passage is the Jews' rejection of the Messiah, and how God still loves them for their fathers' sake, because the gifts that He gave them were never contingent on how they behaved. If they were contingent on obedience, then they weren't gifts. The same is true of all of God's gifts, as the passage states.

Therefore, the gift of Eternal Life is in every sense a true gift. It will never be taken back from those to whom it's been given, and is truly without any cost to the recipient. If it

had to be obtained, or kept, by obedience or allegiance to obeying Jesus Christ, then it would not be a “gift”, and would be far from “free”, unless one has redefined both words to mean nothing at all in any practical circumstance.

This gift is in contrast to the various rewards that God promises faithful believers. This is another motivation - in addition to avoiding God's chastening here on earth - given to believers to live righteously, and work diligently, despite their eternal destiny being fixed.

These rewards are contingent upon good works, as two of the most famous passages on the topic plainly state:

Matthew 16:27

27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then **he shall reward every man according to his works.**

Revelation 22:12

12 And, behold, I come quickly; and **my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.**

Earning these rewards, and adding to our inheritance in the coming Kingdom, is a major theme in the New Testament, and so it's worth laying some groundwork and explaining here.

On this subject, the Bible teaches that all of those who have believed in Christ throughout history will be caught up to be with Him when He comes again - an event typically referred to as the “Rapture”:

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and **the dead in Christ shall rise first:**
17 **Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.**

This “first resurrection” will be followed by thousand-year period of Christ ruling on this earth, during which those who were raised will rule and reign with Him:

Revelation 20:4-6

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and **they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.**
5 **But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.** This is the first resurrection.
6 **Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.**

It is before this thousand-year period, commonly referred to as the “Millennium”, that believers will receive the rewards that they have earned for their service to Christ:

Luke 14:13-14

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: **for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.**

The degree to which each believer receives their rewards and millennial inheritance will be determined at a judgment. That is, even though it's true that believers been "saved from wrath" (Romans 5:9) through Christ, and "shall not come into condemnation" (John 5:24) through Christ, they are still going to appear before God in a judgment.

This judgment is referred to twice in Scripture as the "Judgment Seat of Christ":

2 Corinthians 5:9-10

9 Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

10 For **we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.**

Romans 14:10-12

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for **we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.**

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then **every one of us shall give account of himself to God.**

Above, we see that in two letters written to the saved (2 Corinthians 1:1-2, Romans 1:7), it is still made very clear that we have a future judgment that will determine an outcome that hangs in the balance for us, depending on our works.

We are given some of the details of this judgment in First Corinthians chapter three:

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

12 Now if any man **build upon this foundation** gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

14 **If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.**

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: **but he himself shall be saved;** yet so as by fire.

From this passage, notice:

- This judgment is for those who are building on Jesus Christ as their foundation (verses 11-12), i.e., Christians
- Works are being discussed (verses 13-15), meaning, as discussed at length in Chapter 5, this has nothing to do with Salvation
- They will receive rewards for whichever of their works pass the inspection (verse 14)

- Even if all of their works are burned up, they are still saved, though they have no rewards (verse 15)

The unsaved are nowhere to be found at the Judgment Seat of Christ. It's a judgment by Christ on His own people, who have built on Him as a foundation, to determine each individual's degree of rewards and inheritance. It is not a judgment by God on sinners to determine whether they go to Heaven or Hell.

The primary judgment for unbelievers takes place after the Millennium - over one thousand years after we have already been raised from the dead - because as we saw already, "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Revelation 20:5).

This judgment on unbelievers, who are "condemned already" (John 3:18), will essentially just be a condemnation of their lives based on the Law (Revelation 20:12-13) by Jesus Christ (Acts 17:31). At this judgment, commonly called the "Last Judgment", or "Great White Throne Judgment", unbelievers will find that their name is "not found written in the book of life", and will be sent to Hell:

Revelation 20:11-15

11 And I saw a **great white throne**, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. **This is the second death.**

15 **And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.**

Above, notice that some of the people in this resurrection are consigned to the "second death", whereas "the second death hath no power" on those raised in the first resurrection (Revelation 20:6). Christians are not in danger of coming into condemnation here. Our judgment was to determine the degree of rewards we receive, whereas a judgment on the unsaved is to determine the degree of punishment they receive.

In summary, God is careful to make the distinction between the free gift of Salvation, and the rewards that stand to be lost or earned by believers based on their obedience to Christ. Conflating the two categories is the error of every false denomination of Christianity that has ever existed, because it terminates in an entirely works-based Salvation.

Salvation cannot be lost, because it is a gift, and a gift in the truest sense of the word - totally without cost to the recipient, and never to be rescinded.

Chapter 7 - The Only Payment for Sin

The notion that good works can pay for, or somehow "cancel out" sins, is almost ubiquitous across all the world's religions. However, God reveals in the Bible that the only thing He accepts as payment for sin is blood atonement:

Hebrews 9:22

22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and **without shedding of blood is no remission.**

This was a principle that God revealed in the Old Testament:

Leviticus 17:11

11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for **it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.**

The above was in reference to animal sacrifices, which are described in great detail in various parts of the Law. All of these sacrifices served to testify to the fact that blood atonement is all that God accepts as payment for sin.

However, in Hebrews chapters nine and ten, we are given a lengthy dissertation on the difference between those sacrifices and Christ's, during which it is stated that these sacrifices themselves never took away sin, but rather served to picture Christ's atonement, which was actually effectual:

Hebrews 9:12, 9:25-28

12 **Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.**

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Above we see that unlike the temple sacrifices, Christ's sacrifice was made, and offered, a single time. This teaching is continued in the next chapter:

Hebrews 10:1-4, 10:10-14

1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

10 By the which will **we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and **offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:**

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

So, it is only Jesus Christ's once-for-all atonement on the cross that is accepted by God as payment for sin. On the cross, God "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21), and so Jesus "bore our sins in his own body" (1 Peter 2:24), facing the wrath of God in your place - just as was prophesied to happen so clearly in the Old Testament (Isaiah 52:13-53:12). His resurrection from the dead showed that God was satisfied with the payment, and the payment was complete.

This is the only payment that has ever actually paid for sins, at any point in history, and is therefore the only claim that any person can make as a basis for their forgiveness of sins (John 8:24). The fact that this is the only accepted payment creates an impasse for all of mankind, as either all of someone's sins are covered by this payment, or none of their sins are paid for.

Christians are only accepted by God on the basis of this atonement:

Revelation 1:5

5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. **Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,**

Acts 20:28

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, **which he hath purchased with his own blood.**

Ephesians 1:7

7 **In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,** according to the riches of his grace;

Colossians 1:14

14 **In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:**

Once a person is covered by the blood of Christ, they are saved from the judgment of God - something pictured in the symbol of the Old Testament Passover, wherein a lamb's blood was put on the doorpost of a home, sparing all those inside, regardless of any other circumstances (Exodus 12:3-13). Consequently, in the New Testament, Christ is called "our Passover" (1 Corinthians 5:7).

As previous sections of this book have discussed at length, becoming a partaker of this atonement is done by putting one's faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. This can even be explicitly deduced from the passage in Hebrews chapter ten above, where you'll notice that the partakers in Christ's atonement were called the "sanctified":

Hebrews 10:14

14 For by one offering he hath **perfected for ever them that are sanctified.**

Then, we can turn to the book of Acts, and see that it is stated that one becomes "sanctified by faith":

Acts 26:18

18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among **them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.**

The fact that believers are "sanctified by faith", and all those who are sanctified are "perfected forever", forms a strong proof for Eternal Security. Once someone is made a partaker of Christ's atonement, they are perfected forever in the sight of God, because all of their sins are paid for, and the Lord does not impute their sins to them (Romans 4:6-8).

It's also manifest that believers are supposed to know, and be confident in, their everlasting sanctification, because of how the term "saint" is used in Scripture. A "saint" is "one who is sanctified", as we read:

1 Corinthians 1:2

2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, **to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints**, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's:

The word "saint" is the most common term used to refer to living believers in the entire Word of God. Often, it's directed towards the entire audience of an epistle, or, as in Psalms, a vast congregation of people:

Psalms 30:4

4 Sing unto the Lord, **O ye saints of his**, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.

Ephesians 1:1

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, **to the saints which are at Ephesus**, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Philippians 4:21-22

21 **Salute every saint in Christ Jesus.** The brethren which are with me greet you.
22 **All the saints salute you**, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

This is significant, because all of these instances of living believers being referred to as "saints" is the Word of God declaring that those people are destined for Heaven when they die, as all those who are sanctified are "perfected forever".

People in the Bible, then, not only had assurance of their eternal destinies, but the destinies of those in their churches, and the audiences of their writings. It was not something they were sheepish to declare, or had doubts regarding.

This is only possible if they correctly understood that Jesus Christ's payment for sin is the only basis for their justification before God. "Good behavior" is not a payment for sin. "Submission" is not payment for sin. Telling God you love Him is not payment for sin. Saying sorry does not pay for sin. Rather, the "wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), and "without the shedding of blood, there is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22).

All of the other religions of the world are trying to pay for sins with their own invented methods, which God doesn't regard at all. Similarly, all Christian denominations that teach loss of Salvation demonstrate that they are counting on their continued obedience, rather than the payment of Christ, to pay for their sins, their assertions notwithstanding. Both reject Christ's one payment as the only basis for their atonement, in favor of the "filthy rags" of their own righteousness (Isaiah 64:6).

In summary, God has revealed that in this situation that He created, He requires blood atonement for sin, and specifically, only the blood of Christ is satisfactory. Nothing outside of that atonement can pay for sin. It is for this reason, combined with the fact that every single person continually violates the Law of God, as detailed in Chapter 3, that no one enters Heaven by being good, but rather only by being forgiven.

The way that one partakes in the atonement is by putting their faith in Christ as their Savior, whereupon they are saved from all of their sins, and sanctified forever. Nothing that a believer does can alter the fact that their sins are paid for, or can affect the basis of that payment, because the basis of that payment had nothing to do with their behavior in the first place.

Chapter 8 - God's Metaphors for Salvation

The Lord, throughout His preaching, used metaphors to liken something the audience was familiar with to Salvation.

The greatest example of this is John chapter six's teaching on the Bread of Life:

John 6:35, 49-51, 54, 58

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: **he that cometh to me shall never hunger**; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, **that a man may eat thereof, and not die.**

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: **if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever**: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

54 **Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.**

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: **he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.**

Five times in a single chapter, the Lord says that anyone who eats the bread of life will never hunger, and never die. So, what is the Lord contrasting this with? Normal bread. With normal bread, eating once doesn't satisfy you forever. If you don't continuously eat, you will die, and even if you do continuously eat, you will still die eventually - even if that bread falls from Heaven during the Exodus (verses 49, 58).

Of course "eating" the Bread of Life is a physical metaphor, and spiritual application is believing in Jesus, which is why in the passage He states:

John 6:40, 47, 63

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that **every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.**

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.**

63 **It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing:** the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

So, why liken belief to eating a piece of bread? Because belief, like eating a piece of bread, happens in a moment, not a lifetime. Because belief, like eating a piece of bread, is easy. Because belief requires no effort on behalf of the believer. That is all consistent with the metaphor.

And, notice what else Christ says in the passage about believers:

John 6:37

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and **him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.**

By faith, a person comes to Jesus Christ once, they eat the Bread of Life once, and as a result, they will never hunger, and never be cast out. They are not required to come unto Him over and over, and eat over and over, for their entire life. That would obliterate the metaphor, as then the Bread of Life would be identical to ordinary bread, which must be continuously eaten. If continuous eating were required, it would also mean that many who ate will hunger again, and not live forever, and also that Jesus will ultimately cast out many who came to Him, all of which contradict what the passage plainly states.

In a similar vein to this metaphor, there is the metaphor of the Living Water, just two chapters earlier in the Gospel of John:

John 4:9-14

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, **If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.**

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, **Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:**

14 **But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst;** but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Above, just as Christ said that any who ate the Bread of Life would never hunger, He says to the woman at the well that any who drink the Living Water would never thirst. And, once again, we know that Christ is referring to belief when using the metaphor of “drinking” the Living Water, because of something He said in John chapter six, which we looked at already, and also later in chapter seven:

John 6:35

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and **he that believeth on me shall never thirst.**

John 7:37-39

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, **If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.**

38 **He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.**

39 **(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive:** for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Is it an arduous, lifelong undertaking to drink a cup of water? No, because neither is belief, and that’s exactly why Christ chose the metaphor when speaking to the Samaritan

woman, and elsewhere. One would be hard-pressed to find a more simple, straightforward action, and so Christ chose it to represent the simple, straightforward action of putting your faith in Him.

Then, as one of the last verses in Scripture, the Lord gives a final invitation that once again emphasizes the freeness of the Water of Life:

Revelation 22:17

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. **And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.**

Notice especially that the above verse encourages one to “come” to Christ, and what did we see in John six? “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37). And elsewhere, “coming” to Christ is described as “rest”, in distinction from arduous labor:

Matthew 11:28-30

28 **Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and **ye shall find rest unto your souls.**

30 **For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.**

In contrast to the image Christ gives above of someone unloading their burdens when they come to Him, most of professing Christianity teaches an unbearable “yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1, Acts 15:10, Matthew 23:4) - that anyone who comes to Christ has just incurred a lifelong commitment to obey, to some unknown degree, the perfect Law of Christ, else face Hell. Such would be a person’s worst fears confirmed, not an unloading of the burden that they had of trying to save themselves, when they were in ignorance.

The idea that it would be “rest” to find out that yes, one must indeed behave to get to Heaven - which is what every lost person already believes to start with - and actually, the standard is stricter than one thought originally - that is, the commandment to be perfect (Matthew 5:48) - is completely nonsensical, but this is the position one finds themselves in under most of professing Christianity. Facing such a standard, with Hell for failure, would cause any honest person to despair in misery and anxiety.

Finally, consider that Christ repeatedly likens believers to weak, simple, helpless, fallible, dependent, children (Matthew 11:25, 19:13-14, Mark 9:35-37, 10:13-15, Luke 9:46-48, 10:21):

Matthew 18:3

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, **Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

Luke 18:15-17

15 And they brought unto him also **infants**, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, **Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.**

17 Verily I say unto you, **Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.**

Christ doesn't liken believers to holy men, monks in a monastery, or ascetics in the wilderness. He likens believers to children. If someone is preaching a Salvation message that requires anything more than simple, childlike faith, they do in spite of Christ's teachings.

There is nothing "childlike" about the complicated religious systems that have been devised by mankind. There is nothing "childlike" about mandating total devotion to a obeying a perfect standard, with a mysterious amount of failure meaning one is sent to the Lake of Fire. No part of any man-made religion can be called "easy", or "rest", because they all mandate that one save themselves via a lifetime of diligent struggle, in violation of these metaphors.

So, in summary, what is God showing us with these metaphors? That Salvation is free. It's something that He wants to be easy for people to come to Him for. It happens in a moment in time. It is irrevocable. It's easy. It's rest. It's obtained in a childlike manner.

The Bread of Life, and the Living Water, especially, are clear testaments to the fact that once someone is saved, they are always saved. Otherwise, they ate of the Bread of Life, yet hungered again, and drank the Living Water, yet thirsted again - two things which are Biblically impossible without making these metaphors completely meaningless, inconsequential, and deceptive.

Likewise, the fact that believers are exhorted to be childlike, and the faith that saves is likened to humbling oneself as a child, bolsters the Free Grace position that belief is simply believing that something is true, in total disparity to the burdensome, rigorous system that most of professing Christianity prescribes when they redefine "faith" or "believe" to include literally anything they can think to add to belief in Jesus.

Chapter 9 - The “Problem Verses” Aren’t Problems

This single chapter cannot hope to address all of the verses that are most commonly used to attack the doctrines of Salvation by faith alone and Eternal Security. There are many entire books dedicated to explaining every alleged “problem” passage for the Free Grace position, such as “The Grace New Testament Commentary” by Grace Evangelical Society, and “Grace, Salvation, and Discipleship” by Charlie Bing.

There are many articles on faithalone.org, which go through individual verses that opponents of these doctrines frequently use, and explain what they mean. There is also an entire topical article section on my site faithalone.net, entitled "Does (this verse) Teach Works Salvation?", which does the same thing. There are plenty of resources out there for understanding difficult individual verses.

However, what this chapter will show is that, before even looking at any alleged “problem” verse, none of them could possibly be teaching works Salvation (explicitly or implicitly), or that a believer could lose their Salvation.

To begin, the Bible is not just one continuous manual on how to get to Heaven. There is only a single book that says it’s written to the lost to tell them how to be saved, and that is the Gospel of John:

John 20:30-31

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

It’s common sense, then, that the Gospel of John should be the first resort when building a foundation for the doctrine of Salvation.

In the Gospel of John, it is made abundantly clear that anyone who simply believes in Jesus has Everlasting Life:

John 3:15-16, 18

15 That **whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.**

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that **whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**

18 **He that believeth on him is not condemned:** but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:36

36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John 5:24

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.**

John 6:39-40

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that **every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.**

John 6:47

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.**

These verses alone form a strong enough, clear enough basis to prove that Eternal Life is simply achieved by putting one's faith in Christ.

However, they leave a single "out" for those who reject that teaching, and that is to redefine "belief" to mean "living in submission and obedience to Jesus for one's entire life, to a nebulous, undefined degree", even though that's not what the word means according to the dictionary, that's not how Jesus used the word (John 8:24, 11:25-27, etc.), that's not how the Apostles used the word (Acts 15:11, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, etc.), and that's not how anyone uses the word in daily life, for any other application.

We have two clear passages in the Epistles to choose from to Biblically prevent this attempt at a redefinition, comparing Scripture with Scripture:

Romans 4:5

5 But to him that **worketh not, but believeth** on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace are ye saved **through faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 **Not of works**, lest any man should boast.

These verses show that the validity of faith is detached from things done in service to God or others. We get Eternal Life by believing, and believing does not necessitate works. Chapter 5 of this book showed that the "works" spoken of in these verses encompass any good thing that one could possibly do, and so they are saying what they plainly appear to be saying.

So, "belief" really does just mean accepting that a proposition is true, and for the Christian, that means believing that Jesus, and His work, and not their own righteousness, is what justifies them before God, and gives them Eternal Life.

Therefore, we know that no matter what verse we encounter, it will never teach Salvation by faith plus obedience, or that one can lose their Salvation, because we already know that we are given Eternal Life by faith alone without any works, and nothing in the Bible will ever contradict that.

Our simple foundation, then, from which we will interpret the rest of the Word of God, can be summarized as:

John 6:47

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.**

Romans 4:5

5 But to him that **worketh not, but believeth** on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

This tiny foundation of just two verses, is unshakeable. Nothing will ever, ever, contradict what they teach, and what they teach is that Eternal Life is by faith alone in Christ, plus nothing. So, if any passage would ever appear to contradict that, there is something wrong with your understanding of that other passage, and it will need to be interpreted in light of the crystal-clear foundation that is already in place.

In closing, to give one example of a principle that aids in understanding alleged problem passages, recognize that a significant amount of these verses can be settled by realizing that there are multiple senses in which the same term can be used - that is to say, words can have more than one meaning - which is hardly a theological revelation.

For instance:

- There is eternal Salvation from Hell (Ephesians 2:8-9), and there is temporal salvation from peril, or bad things in this life (Matthew 14:30, James 2:14, 1 Timothy 2:15, 4:16, Psalm 18:3, Romans 10:9-10, 13:11, 1 Peter 3:20-21, Acts 27:31, etc.)
- There is eternal holiness, where one is reckoned as holy before God (Ephesians 4:24, Romans 11:16), and there is experiential holiness, where someone is experiencing practical holiness in their daily life as an expression of walking in the new nature (Romans 12:1, 1 Peter 1:15-16, 2 Peter 3:11, Colossians 1:21-22, etc.)
- There is eternal sanctification before God (Acts 26:18, Romans 15:16, 2 Thessalonians 2:13), and there is experiential sanctification, much like experiential holiness (John 17:17, 1 Corinthians 7:14, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, etc.)
- There is eternal, judicial forgiveness, where our sins are paid for, and are no longer the basis for an eternal condemnation (Revelation 1:5, Colossians 1:14, 2:13, Acts 26:18, Romans 4:7-8, Ephesians 1:7), and there is fellowship forgiveness, which repairs the temporal damage in our relationship with God or others caused by sin (1 John 1:7, 1:9, James 5:15, Ephesians 4:32, Mark 11:25-26, etc.)
- There is justification before God (Romans 3:28), and justification before men (James 2:24)
- There is the righteousness of God, which is perfection (Romans 3:10, 10:3-4, Philippians 3:9, 2 Corinthians 5:21), and there is personal righteousness relative to other people (1 Corinthians 15:34, Acts 10:35, etc.)

There are other common-sense principles used in expounding alleged problem texts, which are developed and covered in much more detail in the resources mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, but above is one example of the basic principles of interpretation that are shunned by almost all Christian denominations.

In summary, every single person, on the doctrine of Salvation, has a foundation of verses from which they interpret other verses. How someone understands the Bible will largely be an outcome of what they choose as their foundation, and their interpretation of those foundational verses.

By starting in the God-prescribed location of the Gospel of John, we are able to form a strong base from which to build out the rest of our theology. By starting with the simple message of God to unbelievers, which is redundantly clear on how to have Eternal Life as a present possession, we are now ready to interpret the rest of the New Testament, which was written to believers, who should already have that foundation in place.

Chapter 10 - The Many Glorious Things God Declares About Believers

A large part of the New Testament consists of statements designed to comfort and remind believers of their status, and the many blessings that they have, by virtue of their faith in Christ.

Therefore, it's worth taking some time to consider the many glorious things that God declares about believers, in the present tense, in Scripture. Many of these declarations add to, and integrate well with, other themes already covered in this book up to this point.

For instance, we, as believers, are "children of God" (Galatians 3:26), the "sons of God" (1 John 3:1-2, John 1:12), "born of God" (1 John 5:1), begotten of God (James 1:18), "begotten again" (1 Peter 1:3), and born of "incorruptible seed" (1 Peter 1:23). This new birth created in us a "new creature" (1 Corinthians 5:17), which "cannot sin" (1 John 3:9, 5:18) because it has been "created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24).

As children of God, we are "brethren" of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:29, Hebrews 2:11), and therefore "joint-heirs of God" with Him (Romans 8:16-17, Galatians 4:5-7).

You have "obtained an inheritance" (Ephesians 1:11), which is an "eternal inheritance" (Hebrews 9:15), "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:4), and so have a "hope which is laid up for you in heaven" (Colossians 1:5). You have been made to "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6), and God has "blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

You "are bought with a price" (1 Corinthians 6:20, 7:23), you are one who Christ "purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28), you are "not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold" "but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18-19), and Christ "has redeemed us to God by (His) blood" (Revelation 5:9).

The Holy Spirit "dwells" inside us (2 Timothy 1:14), the Holy Ghost is "given unto us" (Romans 5:5), we have "have the firstfruits of the Spirit" (Romans 8:23), God has "sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Corinthians 1:22, 5:5), we are "sealed" with the Spirit "unto the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30), and are "sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession" (Ephesians 1:13-14), which looks forward to "the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:23), when God "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Philippians 3:21), and "this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:52-54), because when Christ appears, "we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2), and shall "appear with him in glory" (Colossians 3:4).

Jesus Christ is "in you" (Colossians 1:27, John 14:20), and is "the truth" (John 14:6) "which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever" (2 John 1:2). God the Father, also, is "in you all" (Ephesians 4:6).

You are "the temple of God" (1 Corinthians 3:16), "the temple of the living God" (2 Corinthians 6:16), and "the temple of the Holy Ghost" (1 Corinthians 6:19).

We are "in Christ Jesus" (1 Corinthians 1:30), we "are the body of Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:27), "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones" (Ephesians 5:30), we "are one body in Christ" (Romans 12:5), our "bodies are the members of Christ" (1

Corinthians 6:15), and since Jesus is God's "beloved Son" (Matthew 3:17), we are "accepted in the beloved" (Ephesians 1:6).

We have been "made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13), so we are "fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19). We are "partakers of the inheritance of the saints" (Colossians 1:12), we "are now the people of God" (1 Peter 2:10), we are "a spiritual house, an holy priesthood" (1 Peter 2:5), "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9), and we are "kings and priests unto God" (Revelation 1:6, 5:10).

You are "a Jew" (Romans 2:28-29), because you have "the circumcision of Christ" (Colossians 2:11, Philippians 3:3). We are "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29), and so are inheritors of all "the promises" made to Abraham (Galatians 3:16).

You are "the elect of God" (Colossians 3:12), have the "election of God" (1 Thessalonians 1:4), because of "the faith of God's elect" (Titus 1:1), and "who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Romans 8:33). You are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (1 Peter 1:2), because "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Romans 8:29), "moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Romans 8:30).

Jesus "hath loved us, and hath given himself for us" (Ephesians 5:2), "gave himself for our sins" (Galatians 1:4), "gave himself for us" (Titus 2:14), "died for us" (Romans 5:8), and "laid down his life for us" (1 John 3:16), when God "made him to be sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21), and He "bore our sins in his own body" (1 Peter 2:24).

Therefore, you have the "forgiveness of sins" (Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14, Acts 26:18), "your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake" (1 John 2:12), you have "the remission of sins" (Romans 3:25, Acts 10:43), you have been "saved" from the penalty of your sins (Matthew 1:21, Ephesians 2:8, Titus 3:5, John 3:17), your "sins are covered" and not "imputed" to you (Romans 4:7-8, 2 Corinthians 5:19), Christ has "purged our sins" (Hebrews 1:3), "is the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 2:2, 4:10), "washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Revelation 1:5), and God has "forgiven you all trespasses" (Colossians 2:13), and "iniquities" (Romans 4:7), so He says "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 8:12, 10:17).

You have "overcome the world" (1 John 5:4-5), and God "has delivered us from the power of darkness" (Colossians 1:13).

You have "passed from death unto life" (John 5:24), you have been "quickened" from the death caused by sin (Ephesians 2:1, 2:5, Colossians 2:13), and you have "risen with him" from the dead (Colossians 2:12).

You "have everlasting life" (John 3:16, 3:36, 5:24, 6:40, 6:47, 1 Timothy 1:16), you "have eternal life" (John 3:15, 6:54), you "shall live forever" (John 6:51, 6:58), you have the "promise" of "eternal life" (1 John 2:25, Titus 1:2), "the promise of eternal inheritance" (Hebrews 9:15), you have been given an "everlasting consolation" (2 Thessalonians 2:16), and an "eternal redemption" (Hebrews 9:12).

You will "never hunger" and "never thirst" (John 6:35, 4:14), "shall never die" (John 11:26, 6:50), will "not perish" (John 3:15-16), "shall never perish" (John 10:28), are "not condemned" (John 3:18), "shall not come into condemnation" (John 5:24), are "saved from wrath" (Romans 5:9), are "delivered" "from the wrath to come" (1 Thessalonians 1:10), because "God hath not appointed us to wrath" (1 Thessalonians 5:9).

You have the “righteousness of God without the Law” (Romans 3:21, 4:13, 10:3-4), the “righteousness of God which is by faith” (Romans 3:22, 9:30, Philippians 3:9, Galatians 5:5, Romans 10:10), and “the gift of righteousness” (Romans 5:17-21) “imputed” to you (Romans 4:11, 4:22-25) “without works” (Romans 4:6), because your “faith is counted for righteousness” (Romans 4:5).

We are “justified by faith” (Romans 3:28, 3:30, 5:1, Galatians 3:24), “justified by the faith of Christ” (Galatians 2:16), “justified by his blood” (Romans 5:9), “justified by his grace” (Titus 3:7), “justified freely by his grace” (Romans 3:24), and “justified from all things” (Acts 13:39), because God is “the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Romans 3:26).

We are “sanctified by faith” (Acts 26:18), “sanctified by the Holy Ghost” (Romans 15:16), we have the “sanctification of the Spirit” (2 Thessalonians 2:13, 1 Peter 1:2), we “are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ” (Jude 1:1), “we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ” (Hebrews 10:10, 13:12), and “by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Hebrews 10:14).

You have been “received” by Christ (Romans 15:7), you have “returned unto the Shepherd” (1 Peter 2:25), and Christ says “him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37).

You have “peace with God” (Romans 5:1), you are “reconciled to God” (Romans 5:10, 2 Corinthians 5:18, Ephesians 2:16, Colossians 1:21), are “known of God” (Galatians 4:9), and have the “love of God”, permanently (Romans 8:38-39).

You have Jesus Christ praying for you by “making intercession” on your behalf (Romans 8:34, Hebrews 7:25), you have the Holy Spirit praying for you by “making intercession” on your behalf (Romans 8:26-27), Jesus Christ is your “advocate with the Father” (1 John 2:1), and you have angels “sent forth to minister” to you (Hebrews 1:14).

God “cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7), “will never leave you, nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5), and Christ is “with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20).

In most of professing Christianity, all of these declarations are rendered inert by making them so precarious that they are almost not worth mentioning. They would be so transitory that they wouldn’t apply to hardly anyone reading the letter - and if God’s actual standard of perfection was used, nobody whatsoever.

Recall that the greatest Christian to ever live said “we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that I do” (Romans 7:14-15). If these declarations were contingent upon behavior, they wouldn’t apply to the Apostle Paul who wrote most of them, and certainly not you, or I, or any Christian today, who fall well short of the Apostle Paul by any metric, and infinitely short of God’s perfection (Romans 3:23), on a constant basis (1 John 1:8, Ecclesiastes 7:20, Luke 11:3-4).

If these declarations were as transitory and uncertain as most of Christianity teaches that they are, they couldn’t be directed towards believers in the indiscriminate way that they are in Scripture, and certainly not in the present tense. These statements would have to be loaded with caveats, with constant reference to the person’s behavior, and reminders of how shaky and uncertain these statuses are, which is the exact opposite of what we see, and imparts the exact opposite impression as the actual statements do.

Instead, we see exhortations to live righteously in light of the fact that all of these things apply to us, simply by virtue of our faith in Christ. They are encouragements based on the fact that we are exalted in hundreds of ways by virtue of our faith, not inconsequential “hope-so’s” only to be obtained by the subset of the audience consisting of the few that

break the Law slightly less, and walk in the flesh slightly less often, and fail to obey Christ slightly less, than their brothers and sisters.

Such a view of these declarations renders them impotent, reads hundreds of vague caveats into Scripture where none are found in the text, and diminishes Christ's work by replacing it, and all that it brings us that believe, with a synergistic system where our imperfect, tainted efforts at holiness can somehow be mixed with Christ's work to bring about all of these glorious declarations for us personally, based on our works as the sole determining factor, as obviously, none deny that Christ has already done His part.

In summary, the hundreds of glorious declarations given to all believers in the present tense in Scripture are designed to set our minds at ease, comfort us, and encourage us in light of our status, which we have by virtue of our faith in Jesus Christ. They are given for all believers to revel in, "rejoice" in (Philippians 3:1, 4:4, 1 Thessalonians 5:16), and "glory" in (1 Corinthians 1:31, 2 Corinthians 10:17), to inspire us to live lives pleasing to Christ in light of our exalted status, our Eternal Security, and our wonderful present reality.

Chapter 11 - Conclusion

Any time a believer doubts their Salvation, it's because they have taken their eyes off of what they once knew was the only valid basis for their Salvation - Jesus, and His righteousness, imputed to them. Instead, they have begun to look inward at a corrupt, fallible sinner, having lost sight of the fact that even if they were to live an entirely sinless life from this moment forward, they would have no greater basis for justification than they have right now.

Assurance of Salvation is only possible if you, and your works, are taken out of the equation, as you will never achieve, or even approach, God's mandate of perfection (Matthew 5:48, 1 Peter 1:15-16), which leaves infinite room for doubt if one's own life is looked at as a basis for assurance.

Eternal Security is only a meaningful doctrine if it applies to "bad people", firstly, because "there is none righteous, no, not one" (Romans 3:10). Many denominations teach a fake "Eternal Security" which only applies to relatively good people, who obey Jesus Christ to some undefined degree. In other words, they relegate all of the promises about Christ never losing someone as being about Him upholding His "end of the bargain", as if anybody with even a basic belief in the Deity of Christ, or a shred of common sense, ever doubted that in the first place.

No one questions God's faithfulness, or power to keep us saved, they question their own role to play and whether they can hold up their "part", because they know, if they are honest, that they are not reliable. God knows this, and so He gave the many proofs covered in this book to reassure you that even if you don't behave (which you don't), and don't obey (which you don't), and even if you sin (which you do), He won't forsake you. That's the difference between a fake, inconsequential Eternal Security doctrine and a meaningful one.

Salvation by faith alone, and Eternal Security thereafter, is the only Salvation doctrine that gives God all of the glory, as all of Christ's redemptive work is left untouched by man's imperfect attempts at holiness. It also upholds the highest view of God's holiness, because it doesn't seek to lower His perfect righteous standard to one that can be met by a sinner trying his best, but instead, acknowledges that we can never meet it without the perfect imputed righteousness of Christ, and that alone.

Salvation by faith alone is also the only "Gospel", which means "good news" (compare Luke 4:18 with Isaiah 61:1). It is not "good news" to be told that you must live up to an extremely high standard of personal holiness for your entire life to an unknown degree, or else you will go to Hell. It's not even "news", because that is just a permutation of what every unsaved person already believes, and what every other religion teaches.

The truth God gave to mankind should logically cause abounding joy, and genuine love and gratitude, given that God, who is the truth (John 14:6), designed the human brain. Eternal Security breeds gratefulness, peace, joy, and love for God and others, and therefore fulfills this criteria in the way that no fake "Gospel" of "save yourself or go to Hell", with Jesus thrown in as an afterthought as being somehow helpful, but not enough, ever can.

Believers in the doctrine of Eternal Security focus on the Biblical motivations that God gives believers for living righteously, despite the fact that we are eternally secure - namely, obeying out of love and gratitude for the God that loved us enough to die for us, obeying out of love for others that God has blessed us to be able to influence, securing the blessings of God in this life (Psalm 1:1-3), avoiding temporal punishment here on earth (Hebrews

12:6-11), and the opportunity to gain eternal rewards in Heaven (1 Corinthians 3:11-15). We do not treat sin as insignificant, or obedience as optional - we simply refuse to abuse and lie to our brethren by threatening them with the Biblically impossible punishment of loss of Salvation.

Finally, Salvation by faith alone and Eternal Security is the “narrow way” (Matthew 7:13-14), because it’s based entirely on “the way” (John 14:6) and “the door” (John 10:7-9), Jesus, and also more than 80% of professing Christian denominations explicitly reject a doctrine that would even resemble paying lip service to Eternal Security.

Even beyond this group, the amount of preachers who preach a meaningful Eternal Security - not the typical “Well, the ‘bad’ person didn’t lose their Salvation, they were just never saved to begin with” - is extremely low, relatively. If anyone thinks that the “narrow way” is effectively “trying your best to submit to Jesus’s will and Lordship”, they need to realize that that way is so “narrow” that everyone is trying it. If they think that it’s narrow because most fail to perform, then they are admitting that a person must save themselves in every practical way, and that Jesus being called a “savior” means nothing at all.

Rather, we can take comfort in the fact that God’s Word is clear, and God is able to simply say what He means. He says any believer in Christ has Eternal Life, and it is abundantly clear that people are able to know that they have believed (John 11:25-27, John 20:29; 1 John 5:13, 2 Timothy 1:12). Never allow the many attempts to redefine faith to condition you into thinking that belief is unknowable. It’s not. If you have ever believed in Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have Everlasting Life.

Eternal Security is the most important doctrine in the Bible, and for the thinking, honest person, the only way to have anything resembling peace of mind. When thinking about your Salvation, never make the mistake of looking inward - you will only find imperfection. Your focus has to be on Jesus - what God thinks of Him, what He did, His success, not yours, His perfection, not your imperfection. That is the only way to abide in Christ, and live a victorious Christian life. All Christians need to revel in the fact that Jesus Christ is the one who paid for all of your sins, and gave you Everlasting Life, the very instant you believed in Him, never to leave you for an instant, and that fact will resound for all of eternity:

Hebrews 13:5

5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Appendix I - Tackling Persistent Doubt

Many Christians, even those who are well-acquainted with the Bible's teaching of Eternal Security, find themselves in a persistent state of doubt about their Salvation. This Appendix is intended to give such a believer a method to find peace.

It's very likely that, up to this point, whenever you have had a doubtful thought, you have allowed it to carry quite a bit of weight in your mind. It's likely that you mulled over it, or obsessed over it, frequently enough for it to be troublesome. Over time, the amount of consideration of this terrifying thought that you might not be saved, coupled with the very negative emotions such consideration brings, has created a very unhelpful thinking pattern, which your brain has gotten used to.

The first way to address this is to work on your beliefs about the doubt itself, by beginning to challenge those unhelpful thoughts, whenever they appear. When the doubt arises, don't view it as legitimate, or benign, or worthy of consideration. Immediately remind yourself that questioning your Salvation is, in reality, pondering whether God might be lying, or being deceptive, in His many clear statements on the subject (John 1:12, 3:15-16, 3:36, 6:47, etc.). This doubt is not humble, nor is it worthy of consideration. It's an unhelpful thought pattern that God does not want you to have, and it's not healthy, at all.

At the same time, don't beat yourself up for having the doubt. Be kind to yourself. If you're in the habit of doubting right now, it will take some time to change your thought patterns. However, now that you will have a skillset to address your situation, you can begin to make the changes necessary to have the peace that God so often promises us (John 14:27, 16:33, Colossians 3:15, Philippians 4:6-7, etc.).

Next, after challenging, and refusing to ruminate on the unhelpful thought, affirm to yourself that you are a child of God, and have Everlasting Life, because you have put your faith in Christ, and He is reliable. Let your mind bask in this fact, calling to mind one of the many verses or proofs covered in this book, or from your own studies. Preach these things to yourself.

For instance:

Romans 5:1

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

As a believer, you have *peace* with God. On what basis? On the basis that the Lord Jesus Christ guarantees it, and is your advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1). He covers you with His righteousness (Romans 4:4-8), and justifies you completely, ensuring an eternal peace. You have been saved from condemnation (John 5:24), based on the intercession of the most reliable, faithful guarantor in the universe. How can such a reality fail to quiet a troubled heart?

Picture Christ pleased with you, because He is. Picture God as your loving Father, because He is. You are accepted, and loved. You have Everlasting Life, and will live in the new creation with the Lord, and all the saints, forever. Let these things remain in your mind, as you affirm all the wonderful truths that are discussed in God's Word, directed to you, as His child (see Chapter 10, for instance). This visualization, and affirmation, is the "active"

part of this method. The “passive” part was challenging, and then refusing to ruminate on the unhelpful, untrue thoughts regarding doubting your Salvation.

This method, which can be used to address all kinds of unhelpful thinking patterns in life, is really that simple - just two steps. It's nothing more than a practical implementation of the Lord's command to “bring every thought into captivity” (2 Corinthians 10:5).

It takes some time for this to become habituated, so be patient, and put in persistent effort. If you are especially used to being unkind to yourself, it may feel odd at first. This dissonance gradually disappears as you untrain your mind from that unhelpful way of thinking. You can change the way you think, “renew your mind” (Romans 12:2), and find peace, if you consistently engage in this method. Every day, put some effort into rejoicing in your position in Christ, and preaching to yourself, whether the doubts come or not. Make it a habit, and over time, it will become default. As natural as it feels for you to doubt now, will be as natural as it will be for you to feel secure in Christ. Be patient, and be consistent.

In closing, it's essential to emphasize the vital importance of assurance of Salvation. This is unlike anything else in life. Without having a robust, strong assurance of your peace with God, rooted in the Word of God, you will be drifting from difficulty to difficulty in your Christian life. Your position in Christ is your only refuge when life gets tough, and especially, when it comes time to die. God wants you to have assurance (1 John 5:13), and it can be yours, if you begin to think in a way that reflects the reality of your perfect peace with God.

Appendix II - What about the Mark of the Beast?

In the book of Revelation, the Lord teaches that in the end times, when the Antichrist is active, that he will force all of mankind to take the Mark of the Beast in order to buy or sell:

Revelation 13:15-17

15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that **as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.**

16 **And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:**

17 **And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark,** or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

We are also told in the next chapter that all of those who take the Mark of the Beast will go to Hell:

Revelation 14:9-11

9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, **If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,**
10 **The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone** in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

Therefore, the question arises as to whether Christians can take the Mark of the Beast, and in doing so, lose their Salvation.

Firstly, when speaking on the end times specifically, Jesus said something that indicates that God will supernaturally protect believers from being deceived by the Antichrist:

Matthew 24:23-24

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, **if it were possible,** they shall deceive the very elect.

Mark 13:21-22

21 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not:

22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, **if it were possible,** even the elect.

Both of the chapters are, in context, about the Great Tribulation, which is the same context as much of the book of Revelation, including the two passages above from chapters thirteen and fourteen concerning the Mark of the Beast.

The fact that Christ used the term “if it were possible” when speaking on the elect being deceived, obviously, indicates that it isn’t possible - God will open every believer’s eyes to the Antichrist, when he comes.

But what if a believer, not being deceived, but rather hurting in pain and fear from the Great Tribulation, decides to take the Mark anyway?

Notice in the passage from Revelation 13 that getting the Mark is associated with worship of the image of the Beast, which is an image of the Antichrist that has been supernaturally brought to life by the False Prophet (Revelation 19:20).

Receiving the Mark will therefore involve a blasphemous act before a supernatural entity, which will be able to tell whether or not the worship is genuine. Those with the Holy Spirit, even if they wanted to, due to starvation or otherwise, will not be able to receive it. The beast will recognize that they are saved, and kill them (Revelation 13:15), which is part of his mission to “make war with the saints” (Revelation 13:7). He doesn’t want their worship, he wants them dead.

Furthermore, the punishment for those who get the Mark involves “drinking of the wine of the wrath of God” (Revelation 14:10), whereas the Bible says that Christians are not appointed to wrath:

1 Thessalonians 5:9

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 5:9

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, **we shall be saved from wrath through him.**

Therefore, no Christian can ever be subject to the temporal or eternal wrath that awaits those who take the Mark.

In summary, God will not allow any Christian to be deceived by the Antichrist, and a believer will not be able take the Mark of the Beast, even if they want to, as the Antichrist will know whether or not the worship required to receive the Mark is genuine, and God will not allow any believer with the Holy Spirit to pass whatever that test is.

Appendix III - What about blasphemy against the Holy Ghost?

In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the Lord says that there is an unpardonable sin, namely “speaking against” or “blasphemy against” the Holy Ghost:

Matthew 12:31-32

31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but **the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.**
32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but **whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.**

Mark 3:28-29

28 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:
29 But **he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness,** but is in danger of eternal damnation.

Luke 12:10

10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto **him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.**

The accounts in Matthew and Mark are parallel passages, with the account in Luke having an entirely different context.

So, what is this sin, can a Christian commit it, and if so, do they lose their Salvation?

The sin of those being discussed was saying that Jesus Christ was possessed by Satan, rather than indwelt by the Holy Ghost, and was therefore doing miracles by the power of Satan, while He was physically here on this earth doing miracles:

Mark 3:22. 29-30

22 And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, **He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.**
29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.
30 **Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.**

So, the sin was saying that Christ was possessed by Satan, while He was physically present here on earth. Any other definition of this sin is based on speculation, extrapolating from what actually is stated in the accounts.

Therefore, no one alive today is in danger of committing this sin, and actually cannot commit this sin, even if they tried. No one alive now can see Christ today, hear Him speak, see Him perform miracles, and still conclude, and then verbally declare, that He is possessed by Satan.

If they could, rest assured that they would not care about having committed it, and would not worry about ever having done so. The fact that someone would care at all about having done this sin, is yet more proof that they haven't done this sin, as such would be totally hardened by God, the Holy Spirit ceasing His work of convicting them entirely (John 16:8).

Adding to this, nowhere in Acts or the Epistles are we ever warned about this sin. If it were possible after Christ ascended, or possible for a Christian to perform, there is zero indication of that anywhere in Scripture.

In summary, this sin was being fully convinced that Jesus was a false prophet who was demon-possessed, and then verbally declaring so, even after having seen Him, having heard Him speak, and having witnessed His miracles, while He was physically present here on earth. No living person, let alone a Christian, can commit this sin, and if they did, they would not care at all about having committed it.

Appendix IV - What about those who tamper with the Bible?

In one of the final passages in the Bible, there is a warning about those who remove from the “book of this prophecy” having their part taken out of the Book of Life:

Revelation 22:18-19

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19 And **if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life**, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Therefore, the question arises as to what exactly this means, whether a believer can do this, and if they can, if they will lose their Salvation.

Firstly, what is the act committed by those who “take away from the words of the book of this prophecy”?

The "book of this prophecy" is the book of Revelation. The taking away of the words that is mentioned would have to be done in Greek, since the words being spoken of were originally written in Greek. If this is extended to translations, then that creates a tremendous gray area, as at that point, one would be modifying the words of a translator, rather than the original text that had the curse applied to it, and there are legitimate disagreements on the correct way of rendering any given passage, so who gets to decide whose translation cannot have a single word removed from it?

I believe that the spirit of what is being said here is in regard to someone intentionally, maliciously modifying a Greek manuscript of the book of Revelation, and trying to pass it off as genuine.

So, with that established, can a believer do this, and if they can, do they lose their Salvation?

Can a believer maliciously modify a Greek manuscript? Yes, a believer is capable of doing that physical action. Does that mean that if they do so, they will lose their Salvation?

Firstly, recall that God killed believers who blasphemed the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:29-32). If this were something that God would send someone to Hell over, He would kill a believer long before they were able to do the act.

Secondly, somewhat ironically, Revelation 22:19's mention of the "Book of Life" is a translation quirk of the King James Version, and other versions translated from the Textus Receptus family of Greek manuscripts, stemming from a textual variant. The Majority Text, which takes the most common reading across all manuscripts - which the Textus Receptus usually follows very closely - along with the Alexandrian manuscript family, read "Tree of Life" here. As a consequence, the vast majority of Bibles read "Tree of Life" in Revelation 22:19.

Access to the Tree of Life is predicated on “doing (Christ's) commandments” (Revelation 22:14), and is one of the rewards promised to overcomers (Revelation 2:7). This Appendix isn't on the topic of eternal rewards, but there is a spectrum of “overcoming” for

believers, as in one sense, every believer is an overcomer (1 John 5:4-5), yet still, in Revelation, many times we are presented with things that are based on “overcoming” (Revelation 2:7, 2:11, 2:17, 2:26-28, 3:5, 3:12, 3:21, 21:7), mostly as part of warnings to churches.

The way that they are presented in context, as part of warnings, indicates that at least a subset of them hang in the balance, though considering that some of the things are essentially “not going to Hell”, and others are exalted rewards, context determines which sense, and to what degree “overcoming” is being referred to.

Therefore, having one’s access to the Tree of Life revoked, rather than having their name taken from the Book of Life, is much more theologically consistent with the rest of the Bible, and even within the book of Revelation. That is the punishment for corrupting a Greek manuscript of the book of Revelation.

About the Author

My name is Noah Samuel Zielke. I was raised Roman Catholic, in a town near Chicago, Illinois. I put my faith in Christ when I was 16 years old, as a result of reading a Gospel article on the internet. I now consider myself an Independent Baptist.

I run the website faithalone.net, which, in case of my death, will still be hosted on archive.org. On it, there are articles arranged by topic, discussing my studies of other religions, Free Grace Theology, and various other Christian doctrines and denominations.

I hope that even experienced Christians gleaned something useful from this book. It has no copyright, so do whatever you'd like with it. God bless you, and thank you.