

# THE SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER

## CHAPTER ONE

As we take up this study of “The Security of the Believer,” it is with the desire to be of help; not to drive a wedge between believers. The sharp difference of opinion on this subject is proof enough that it is a difficult matter. Good, honest people who are held in high esteem from both schools of thought, have diligently studied the Bible and have come up with what they feel is the “absolute” regarding this matter. Can both be right? Does the Bible teach both doctrines, “the security of the believer”(once saved, always saved), and “falling from grace” (losing salvation after having received it)? The Bible, being the very Word of God, does NOT teach both doctrines. This being the case who, then, is right?

Can a saved person lose their salvation? If so, how? These questions have always troubled believers, down through the ages. The differing opinions on this subject are a major source for divisions among believers today. I know of no other subject of which there is so much controversy and division. Arguments on this subject, among Christians, often produce more heat than light. This ought not to be so among the brethren. If we, as believers in Christ, cannot discuss our differences in love, with respect for one another’s honest convictions, we have no business trying to preach the Word of God. There can be no place for bitterness, condemnation, and name-calling among the members of the body of Christ.

As we undertake this series of messages, may we plead with you, if we disagree, may we do so in love. Let us go to the Scriptures and study them for ourselves. If we can find something in the Scriptures that is of help, then it is worth our effort, and at least we have been once more to the Word of God.

There are two main views held by Christianity on this subject. Each have their different shades of beliefs, and interpretations; but for the most part the end is the same.

The first school of thought is the belief in the “Security of the believer,” or “once in grace, always in grace.” The ones who hold this view are referred to as being “Calvinistic” in their doctrine.

On the other hand, we have those who feel that a person, who was once saved can lose their salvation. The ones that hold this view are known in the religious world as “Arminian” in doctrine. We will discuss, later on, the basic doctrine of these two vastly different beliefs as a background to one of the most controversial subjects among Christians today.

To find the answer to the question, “Can a saved person ever be lost,” are you willing to lay aside all the arguments of men about predestination, Arminianism, Calvinism, free will, and election? Are you willing to forget about the doctrines of your church, or denomination, and turn to the Word of God, which must, as always, settle every question?

Before we get into the subject of the “security of the believer,” (I prefer the term “eternal life,” but for the sake of clarity we will use the term “security of the believer,) there is another question that is far more important. The most important question is, “Do you have SALVATION?” Before you have assurance of salvation YOU MUST HAVE

SALVATION! We had rather cause one person who is saved to doubt their salvation, than to give assurance of salvation to a person who does not possess salvation. It is for this reason that we are dealing first with the subject of salvation, so you can make sure that you are saved; then follows the messages on the subject of the security of the believer, or “the assurance of Salvation.”

The Bible teaches that there are people who think they are going to Heaven, who think they have eternal life, but they do not! Let us settle this once for all.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”  
(II Corinthians 13:5)

The word “reprobate” here means to be “unapproved, or rejected.” By implication it means “worthless,” or “a castaway.” Paul tells us in this scripture that we are to stop and examine ourselves, and to make sure that we are in the faith, or that we have eternal life, “except ye be found unapproved, or rejected.” Another scripture, found in Matthew chapter 7, says:

“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.  
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?  
And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”  
(Matthew 7:21-23)

The New Testament records many incidents of ones who thought they were saved, but they were not. These are not people who were once saved, and then became unsaved. If you will notice in the Scripture (verse 23) Jesus says unto them, “I never knew you. Depart from me ye that work iniquity.” You see, He did not once know them, and then cast them aside. He said, “I NEVER KNEW YOU.” Make SURE you have eternal life!

Notice how religious the people were, verse 22. They called Jesus “Lord.” They said, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied, cast out devils, done many wonderful works.” All of this in the name of Jesus Christ, but they were not saved, and had never been saved. You would never find a more religious group of people than these recorded here. This is a word of warning recorded in the Scriptures, for us today. It is a warning to us, as the Apostle Paul states, “to examine yourselves.”

The most important question in all the world, for everyone, is not “can you lose your salvation once you have it?” The most important question is, “Have you been born again?” The new birth is absolutely a must. There is no substitute. To go to Heaven “ye MUST be born again!

## CHAPTER TWO

First of all, let us look at the main points of doctrine that are held by the followers of “Calvinism” and “Arminianism.” We must remember that there are different degrees, and shades of belief held by the followers of these men’s teachings. Some hold strictly to the letter of what John Calvin taught. These are known as “ultra-Calvinistic,” or “hyper-Calvinistic” in doctrine. Some followers of Calvin have added other doctrines, including those of Arminianism. However, for the most part, the doctrines are about the same today as they were when expounded by these reformers of yesterday.

The FIVE cardinal doctrines, as taught by John Calvin, and that are still held by his followers today are: (1) The total depravity of man. (2) Unconditional election. (3) Limited atonement; or that Christ died only for the elect. (4) Irresistible grace; salvation is a sovereign work of the Lord from which the one chosen cannot turn away. (5) The perseverance of the saints; the doctrine we call today, “eternal security.”

The FIVE main doctrines as taught by Arminius are: (1) The partial depravity of man. (2) Conditional election; that is, God elected those whom he foreknew, and foresaw from eternity that would believe unto salvation. (3) Universal atonement; that Christ died for all men, not just for the elect. (4) Resistable grace; the sinner can resist the work of the Holy Spirit and not respond to the Spirit’s conviction. (5) Falling from grace; the rejection of the security of the believer. It was from these doctrines, held by these two different schools of thought that the controversy started, and has continued unabated ever since.

The controversy has waxed hot and heavy; and today it is a major wedge dividing fundamental Christianity. I know Christians who agree on all the major doctrines of the Scriptures, such as the “virgin birth,” the “Deity of Christ,” the “infallibility of the Scriptures,” the “blood atonement,” “heaven,” “hell,” and “salvation by faith alone,” but differ on the doctrine of the “security” of the believer. Both sides agree, and preach the same salvation message, faith in Jesus Christ, and they agree on many other points in the Scriptures, especially the salvation Scriptures; however, there seems to be no common meeting place on the doctrines of “the security of the believer,” and “falling from grace.”

Although we were hesitant to take up this Bible study on this subject, we must be faithful to the Word of God.

Since Christians are so divided on this issue, where did it all start? There must be a reason. What Scriptures are quoted to support each view? The major cause for the difference of opinion among Bible students on this subject is the apparent contradiction between two lines of Bible revelation; the Scriptures that teach the Sovereign elective grace of God, and the Scriptures that teach the responsibility and free will of man. The Bible teaches both, but the inability of man to reconcile these two doctrines has led them to reject one or the other.

If you follow the Calvinist teaching of “unconditional election,” “limited atonement.” and “irresistible grace,” the doctrine of “eternal security” becomes automatic. By the same token, if you follow the Arminian teaching of “conditional election,” and resistible grace,” then, of course, you would believe that one could lose their salvation.

May we point out the Scriptures that deal with the sovereignty, or the “election” of God. Scriptures might be multiplied to show that the Bible teaches the doctrine of

Sovereign divine election on the basis of God's grace, and not on the basis of any good or merit He saw in any individual. But here are a few Scriptures to confirm what the Bible clearly sets forth on this teaching.

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.” (Ephesians 1:4,5)

“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” (Ephesians 1:11)

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you...” (John 15:16a)

“For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” (Romans 9:11-13)

The Apostle Peter tells us that God knew beforehand, from eternity, whom He would elect. In I Peter, chapter 1, verse 2, we read: “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father...”

The Sovereign grace of God as related to “predestination” and “election” are God's divine prerogative. He is Righteous, and all of His dealings are just. He alone has absolute power over everything and everyone. If this were not true, He would not be God. This forever must be so, because if God was not Sovereign, then there would be someone above, or at least equal with Him, who could obstruct, over-rule, or bring to naught His purposes. How could we trust a God who was not Sovereign in all knowledge? Foreknowledge, election, and predestination are all attributes of God. These terms are inseparable. You can rest assured that God will do, and has done his part in salvation. We do not deserve it, but God has provided it. He will be just in all His dealings.

God knows who is going to be saved. We do not! There is not a single person on the face of the earth that knows who is going to be saved, and that includes you. If you use the excuse “I am not one of the elect” for not being saved, may I ask you, “Where did you get your information? God, being the only One who knows, how did he reveal this to you?”

God did not leave it up to us to determine who will and who will not be saved. The following illustration will perhaps add some understanding. There were fifteen boys playing in a field. The husband said to his wife, "I am going to call all of these boys in for some ice cream, but just set five bowls." She said, "But there are fifteen boys." He said, "I am going to call all of them, but only five are going to respond."

"For many are called, but few are chosen." (Matthew 22:14)

You can rest assured that God has done His part in the plan of redemption. "Propitiation" means "atonement."

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (I John 2:2)

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (II Corinthians 5:21)

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." (John 3:17)

#### Our Part in God's Great Plan of Redemption

For those who accept the theory that whoever is going to be saved will be saved, why did God entrust to mankind the awesome responsibility of delivering the greatest message ever given? Why would believers be held responsible for the actions of the wicked?

"When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand." (Ezekiel 3:18)

"And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." (Luke 14:23)

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

(I Corinthians 1:21)

“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? (Romans 10:14)

“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” (II Corinthians 5:18-20)

Who can deny the fact of Psalm chapter 126, verse 5? “They that sow in tears shall reap joy.”

#### The Sinner’s Part in Redemption

“Whosoever will” is recorded enough in the New Testament to, beyond a doubt, place the responsibility squarely upon the shoulders of an individual that HE MUST BELIEVE to be saved. The sinner himself must choose to come to Christ. Jesus says:

“Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28)

In the Old Testament, Joshua tells the people to ...”choose you this day whom ye will serve.” (Joshua 24:15)

The most quoted verses in the Bible teach the RESPONSIBILITY OF MAN to make a decision for Christ.

“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.” (John 3:16)

“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.”

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” (John 3:18-19)

Paul, answering the Philippian jailor when he asked, “what must I do to be saved?” replied, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...” (Acts 16:31)

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Romans 10:13)

“To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.” (Acts 10:43)

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” (Romans 10:9)

The last invitation recorded in the Bible says:

“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.” (Revelation 22:17)

This scripture, in Revelation, is one of the most beautiful invitations in the Bible. It makes the way of salvation so plain. However, it also makes it plain that it is up to the individual to COME and BELIEVE.

We have taken the time to show you, from the Bible, these two revelations concerning the Sovereign grace of God in the plan of redemption, and the responsibility of the individual to receive that which God has provided. We have shown that salvation is all of God, and is according to a Sovereign Divine choice “before the foundation of the world.” We have also shown that God makes His plea to the free will of man.

How can we reconcile the two teachings of the Divine Sovereign election, and the free will of man? How can we bring these two together? My friend, we are not expected to bring them together, or to reconcile them, but we ARE EXPECTED TO BELIEVE THEM! To understand it, you would have to have the mind of God; but you can believe it. They are both revelations of God, and only God understands this paradox. These two clear Bible teachings are brought together in John chapter 6. Jesus says:

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” (John 6:37)

The first part, “all that the Father giveth me, shall come to me,” is God’s part in salvation. The human responsibility...your responsibility, is “him that cometh to me...” You may say “I don’t understand it.” Neither do I, nor does anyone else for that matter. It is a mystery known only to God, and any attempt to understand, instead of believing it, has caused the different interpretations among sincere believers.

There are those that, because they cannot reconcile the Sovereign grace of God and man's free will, will reject the free will of man, and preach only grace. While others, not being able to reconcile the two, will reject the Sovereign grace of God and preach man's free will only, ignoring the Bible teaching on the other.

It will help greatly if you will remember that "election" is God's business, and "believing" is your business. I have the confidence that, when I received Christ as my Saviour, God kept His part. That is why I know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that I have eternal life.

I can tell you now how you can know if you are one of the "elect." Just receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour.

### CHAPTER THREE

Is it possible for a person who has received Eternal Life, through redeeming faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, to lose this salvation and go into perdition? This question has divided Christianity for many years. It is our purpose in this series of Bible studies to go to the Word of God, and let the Word settle this question once for all. As we undertake this study, we pray that we might do so with an open Bible and an open mind.

I am sure that among both schools of thought on this subject there is much misunderstanding. We have those who energetically reject the doctrine of the "believer's security" without the faintest idea of what is meant by the term "security." These people reject this doctrine simply because they have been warned that it is a dangerous doctrine. They have been told that we who teach the security of the believer actually give people a license to sin, and this produces a looseness and carelessness in the Christian life. They are led to believe that it is because of this doctrine many Christians live such worldly and ungodly lives, therefore, they shun all Bible teaching on this subject. Many reject it simply because their Church rejects it.

On the other hand, there are those who, having only a mental conception of the grace of God, actually profess to be saved, to be eternally saved, and live like the devil himself; all the while prating about the doctrine of "once saved, always saved." Neither of these actually know anything at all about the grace of God.

Whether a misunderstanding, or just ignorance on the part of the individual who has not studied the Bible, it makes no difference in the true doctrine that the Bible teaches. It is our purpose, in this series of lessons, to go to the Bible and see what it teaches, and believe what the Bible says. We ask you to bear with us in this series of lessons, and I believe that we can show you from the Bible the truths of this doctrine. Before we accept or reject any doctrine we should always seek the answer from the Word of God, and not what some person or Church may teach.

The Bible teaches "the security of the believer" as plain as it teaches "eternal life." In our lesson today, let us look at this from three different points. (1) The Bible teaches the security of the believer because of the Sovereign grace of God. (2) Because of the Omniscience of God, and (3) Because of the intercession that is made for us.

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate  
to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might  
be the firstborn among many brethren.

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 8:29,30)

God has a perfect right, as we stated in our last lesson, to call whomsoever He chooses. This calling is not based upon any good in man at all. Romans, chapter 9, tells us why God chose the nation of Israel to be His covenant people. It was not that they were better, or more worthy, than any other nation. There was absolutely nothing in them that God foresaw which made them more worthy of His grace. All you have to do to find this to be a truth is to check the record of Israel. You will find that they were no more worthy of God’s grace than anyone else. God, in His Sovereign grace, chose them in spite of their unworthiness. Now because you don’t understand this, there is no reason for you to reject it. You may ask, “If this is true, and God in His Sovereignty can have mercy upon whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth (Romans 9:18), then why does He hold men responsible? This question was also anticipated. Here is the question (Romans 9:19) that you, no doubt, have asked many times.

“Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault?  
For who hath resisted His will? (Romans 9:19)

If God is Sovereign in His choice, then how does He hold man responsible? Here is the answer to that question.

“Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?  
Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why  
hast thou made me thus?  
Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump  
to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto  
dishonour?” (Romans 9:20,21)

This is God’s answer. Who are we, poor, fallen, unworthy creatures, to call into question the Sovereignty of God? Why do men have to call into question what God chooses to do? This is not their right at all. They are to receive the gift of mercy that God has provided for them. Why not accept the Bible fact of a Sovereign God, that He has a right to condemn us all, but in His mercy He offers us free salvation.

Many refuse to accept God’s Word until God gives an explanation for what He does, because, they say, that would be “blind faith.” It would not be blind faith if they were not so blind! We accept what the Bible records, even though we do not always understand it. We would understand if we had the mind of God. It is God’s business to do just as He chooses.

Secondly, the Bible teaches the “security of the believer” because of the omniscience of God. Of the many Scriptures that bear on this subject, we quote one from the book of Acts.

“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning  
of the world.” (Acts 15:18)

The omniscience of God demands that those whom He chooses to save will remain saved, and never be lost. By “omniscience” we mean that God is all-wise and all-knowing. God knows the beginning from the end. God must be omniscient or He could not be trustworthy as a Saviour. If there were some things that He did not know, He could not infallibly plan the future, and He could not pre-write history. If God did not know the future there would be no prophecy, and some unforeseen, or unknown, development could upset His program.

We could not trust a God who does not know everything beforehand. According to the Word of God, God knew all about us before we were ever born. He knew all about us before the creation of the world. He chose us in Christ from eternity.

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world...” (Ephesians 1:4)

God did not choose us because He saw some good in us. It was not because He thought we were worthy, or had some merit in His sight. “We love Him, because HE FIRST LOVED US.” Did He choose you because He saw that you would choose Him? No, He did not. Jesus says, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you...” (John 15:16)

If God does the choosing through His Sovereign will, and through His omniscience, (God being all-knowing, all-wise, knowing the beginning from the end) where is there room for falling from grace? If God knew that you would ultimately be lost, after having been saved, why would an all-knowing God choose you in the first place? Why choose you at all, if He knew that you would not last, or hold out? Now you cannot just pass this off by a shake of the head. You must face this question sooner or later, because the “sovereignty” and “omniscience” of God are Bible facts.

A believer is secure because he is in the hands of a Sovereign God and Saviour. God knew all about my failures, my stumbling, and my weakness before He ever saved me. We are secure because we have a truthful God, a God who never lies. He says, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” (Hebrews 13:5b) He says, “I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.” (John 10:28a) My friend, God will never go back on His word. This is the assurance that we would like to make known to the ones who are born again. This assurance is one of the greatest incentives there is for a Christian to live a holy dedicated life.

Some may ask, “what about the sins of the Christian?” Every Christian knows that he is not perfect; that he has “two natures,” the “old” and the “new.” God, in His omniscience, knew all about what we were, and what we would do, before He ever saved us. We have assurance, or “security,” through the intercessory work of Christ.

Will God then condemn the believer that He knew beforehand? Even before He died to redeem us, God knew that we were imperfect, and He made provision for us.

“...It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” (Romans 8:34)

“But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (Hebrews 7: 24:25)

If Christ failed in His intercession, then, of course, all would be lost. But HE WILL NOT FAIL! John tells us (I John 2:1) that we have an “advocate” with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Also in Romans chapter 8 we read:

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” (Romans 8:26,27)

Without the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit as intercessors, none of us, NOT ONE SINGLE PERSON, would be kept. There would be no such thing as a believer being secure, because they would trip and fall, and there would be no way for them to be re-instated; but with this double provision of intercession, there is no power that can touch us.

Romans, chapter 8, verses 26 through 39, records for us one of the greatest promises, outside of salvation itself, that you will find in Scripture. Verse 35, in this chapter, poses the question, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Now think for a moment. Come up with anything that you can imagine. Paul even makes a few suggestions to help. He asks, “Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?” Will any of these separate us from the love of Christ? “As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” It makes no difference, for all of these things are powerless and cannot separate us from the love of God. “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.”

It could be that you are not convinced yet. Maybe you still believe that one can be lost, after being saved. Listen again to what the Scriptures say:

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 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.” (Romans 8:38,39)

Even after reading this portion of scripture, I often hear people say: “That’s true. None of those things can separate us from the love of God, but I can separate myself by my conduct.” Now Paul knew there would be some who would say that, so the Holy

Spirit had him add these words, “nor any other creature.” That includes anyone and everyone! After listing all the things that cannot separate us from the love of God, he covers the whole realm with the words “nor any other creature.” This includes the Devil, his angels, men, and you.

The Word of God teaches that if you are truly born again, you are eternally saved, whether you believe it or not. You are as secure as though you believed it. Not even your doubts, or your rejection of the truth of security, can separate you, if you are justified by faith.

One of the greatest pictures of salvation that we have in the Old Testament is the Passover. In the land of Egypt there was a requirement made of the people. For the death angel to pass over them and not smite their first-born, they must kill a lamb and apply the blood to the door- post of their dwelling. If they had the blood on the door-post, the death angel passed over. The people in the homes that had applied the blood and were sure of God’s word, trusting God’s word, believing that He meant what He said and rejoicing in their safety, were not any more safe than those who had applied the blood, and then waited with fear and trembling to see if God would keep His word. One was just as safe as the other, because it depended upon the BLOOD BEING APPLIED to the door-posts.

Your security depends upon the blood of Jesus Christ. It was sufficient, and is sufficient. It will save, and the intercessory work of Christ will keep. Do not use the excuse “I can’t hold out,” or “I am not one of the elect.” You may know people who seem to have started out with Christ, and then have fallen. Do not base your doctrine on people, but base your doctrine upon the Bible! Receive Christ Jesus as your Savior. He alone saves and keeps!

## CHAPTER FOUR

Of the many reasons for the rejection of the doctrine of “the security of the believer,” by many professing Christians, the one with the least basis of support is that the word “security” is not found in the Bible. Neither is the words “Deity,” “Trinity,” “Millennium,” “Vicarious suffering,” “super-natural conception,” or “substitutionary atonement” found in the Bible. However, these are accepted as sound Bible doctrines by Evangelical Christians everywhere. But when we come to the doctrine of “the security of the believer” many will hold up their hands in holy horror, and tune us out without giving us an opportunity to bring what the Word of God says on this matter. They are saying, “Don’t confuse me with facts, my mind is made up.”

Excuses often used by those who refuse to receive Christ as their Saviour, is that they will be unable to hold out. They are afraid that after having received salvation as a free gift they will not be able to hold on; and after struggling and striving for some time, going through trials, and tribulations, all of their efforts will be in vain and everything will go down the tube. We try to show them that salvation is a gift of God, and that keeping them saved is just as important to God as saving them in the first place. When we show them what the Bible teaches on this subject, we are accused of preaching a damnable doctrine, and some even assert that it is a doctrine of the Devil, out of the pit of Hell itself. Two questions, posed by the Apostle Paul, deserves our utmost consideration.

‘What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us,  
who can be against us?  
He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for  
us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all  
things.’ (Romans 8:31,32)

Why should God be for us enough to save us, when we were undeserving hell-bound sinners, and then turn against us after we are His children? We are reminded of the price that God paid to purchase us. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall He not with him also freely give us all things.” Would God have paid such a tremendous price if He was not willing to go all the way? It is just as easy for God to keep us as it was for Him to save us in the first place. To understand this we must, first of all, understand upon Whom salvation depends. Is salvation all of God from start to finish, or does man have a part? If man has a part, how much of a part does he have in his salvation? Is it more of man and less of God, or more of God and less of man? Or is it on a fifty-fifty basis? The question must be answered, “Is salvation dependent upon God or man?”

I suppose there is one doctrine in which all Evangelical Christians will agree, and that is, “we are saved by grace, and not by works.” For that matter, this is the very heart of Evangelical doctrine. Being saved by grace means that everything in salvation is the work of God, and not our works. The two, grace and works, cannot mix.

“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”  
(Romans 11:6)

In the gospel of John, chapter 6, verses 39,44 and 47 we read:

“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 the last day.” (v. 39)

“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” (v.44)

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” (v.47)

This portion of the Word of God teaches, beyond a shadow of a doubt, four definite things. (1) It teaches that salvation is the “work of God;” a GIFT of God. (2) Those to whom the Father gives to the Son shall never be lost. So, therefore, if you are saved, this is a certainty. (3) The evidence of this everlasting life is an act of faith in Jesus Christ. (4) It is “a present possession.” The Bible says “hath (in the present tense) everlasting life.” A saved person is as secure now as they will be a million years from

now. These verses teach that the work of salvation is ALL OF GOD, and it is a permanent work that will never fail.

We are going to consider several portions of Scripture that sets forth the clear teaching of the Word of God as to whom is responsible for a complete salvation. We read once more from Romans chapter 8.

‘For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.  
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 8:29,30)

In these two verses reference is made to God Himself no less than ten times. It says, “For whom HE did foreknow, HE also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of HIS Son, that HE might be the first-born among many brethren.” In the next verse, “Moreover, whom HE did predestinate HE also called: whom HE called, HE justified, whom HE justified, HE also glorified.” My friend, that is what God does for all who trust in HIM as their Saviour. Our security depends upon what HE HAS DONE and what HE WILL DO.

The Scripture says, “What shall we then say to these things?” As you know, many people say many different things, and some even blame God. But what shall we, who are saved, say to these things? We have every right to Shout, Sing and Praise God, for SALVATION IS OF HIM!

Again let us see what God has done as far as salvation is concerned. In Titus chapter 3 we read:

“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.” (Titus 3:5)

Here again is a clear-cut Scripture that says that salvation is NOT OF WORKS. Now some may ask, “Does not James teach faith and works for salvation? Does not James teach us that a man is justified by works?” Yes, I readily agree that James teaches that man is justified by works; but JUSTIFIED BEFORE WHOM? Paul teaches that we are justified before God “by faith.” James teaches that we are justified before men “by works.” Men cannot see our faith, but they can see what faith produces. James does not have “salvation by works” in mind at all, but he is talking about discipleship. Another Scripture says:

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:  
Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8,9)

The writer tells us why God does not let man have even a small part in salvation. “Not of works, LEST ANY MAN SHOULD BOAST.”

Let us clear up one misunderstanding on which many Christians are confused. They readily admit that they are not saved by works. They will agree that salvation is all of God; the complete price was paid for salvation at Calvary. They agree that to have salvation we must believe; that believing is our only part in salvation. They suppose then, since we are saved by believing, we are unsaved by unbelieving. Notice the Scripture once more. Let us not hasten over this, but pay close attention to what it says. "For by grace are you saved, through faith, AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES." This tells us that even faith is not of ourselves, but that it is A GIFT OF GOD. Even the faith you believe with is a GIFT OF GOD!" Romans chapter 10, verse 17, tells us how this comes about.

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

This is in harmony with the rest of the Scriptures. In I Peter chapter 1, we read:

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (I Peter 1:23)

Again we repeat, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." For those who would take issue with us, do you have a better explanation for Ephesians 2:8? "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

Now here is the clincher! We read in II Timothy chapter 2, verses 12 and 13:

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him he will also deny us:  
If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny Himself." (II Timothy 12,13)

Let us look very closely at verse 13. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." How much plainer do we have to have it stated in the Bible to show that salvation is ALL of God, from start to finish. He will not go back on His Word. Even we are unable to take ourselves out of God's hand. Jesus says:

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."  
(John 10:28,29)

Now you may still believe that "you can pluck yourself out of God's hand," but I think we have just proven, from the Scriptures, that even your unbelief, after you have received Christ, does not alter the fact that God can over-rule even you. Now, you might ask, "what happens if I decide to take myself out of God's hands?" I would suggest,

before you consider this, that you read, carefully, the twelfth chapter of the book of Hebrews. After reading this, if you decide to go ahead, then you are on your own, and you will certainly suffer the consequences; but the consequences will not be the loss of salvation.

If you still contend that the teaching of “the security of the believer” tends to encourage a looseness of living and worldly habits, you still do not understand the grace of God.

You may be concerned about people who have made a profession of faith, who claim to be Christians, who have for years faithfully attended church, prayed, given, and even witnessed for Christ, but now they are backslidden. After many years of “Christian service” they have turned their back upon the Saviour and have gone deeply into sin. They want absolutely nothing to do with other Christians. If they should die, would they go to Heaven? I am sure there are many cases like that today, but this proves absolutely nothing. The Bible teaches that God knows those who are His. The Bible teaches that God chastens His children. We are not to get our Bible doctrine from someone’s life, but from the Bible. It would make no difference if everybody in the world made a profession of faith, went to church, testified, and had the appearance about them that we think they, as Christians, should have; but after a time they turn their back upon God and walk away; it would not prove one thing. There are several reasons why this would not prove anything. First of all, we are not to judge where one is saved or not. We may have our opinion, or we may think so, but we cannot be sure a person is saved. It was even so with Judas, who betrayed Jesus. When Jesus said that He had chosen twelve, and one was a devil, they all ask, “Lord is it I?” They were not aware to whom Jesus was referring until Judas dipped his sop in the dish. Read what God says, in Matthew chapter 7.

“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?” (Matthew 7:22)

“And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:23)

He did not once know them and then cast them away. He said “I NEVER KNEW YOU.”

God alone knows the heart of man, and He is the Judge of salvation. People look on the outside, but God looks on the heart. Israel looked upon Saul, and wanted him as their king, but God knew the heart of Saul, and what the final outcome would be.

God is going to take care of these matters. We are to preach the gospel, and try to convince people to receive Christ as Saviour. This is our business; the rest is God’s business. God is not going to make any mistakes.

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his...” (II Timothy 2:19a)

If you refuse to receive Christ as your Saviour because you are afraid you will not hold out, and that you will end up like so many hypocrites in the church today, let me assure you, this is not what the Bible teaches. Why not take God's Word instead of man's word, and forget the hypocrites? Jesus says:

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”  
(John 6:37)

## CHAPTER FIVE

Since the Bible clearly teaches that a believer is secure in Christ, after once having been saved, why is there so much confusion on this subject among professing Christians today? There are several reasons, I suppose, that would cause some misunderstanding of this subject. There are four important doctrines that, if we understand, will clarify much, if not all, of the confusion. First, many are confused because they lack understanding of the two natures, the one born of the flesh, and the one born of the Spirit. The nature born of the flesh, or Adam, sins continually. The nature born of the Spirit, the new nature, born of God, cannot sin. (I John 3:9) This nature is incapable of sinning because it is “born of God.”

When we receive Jesus Christ, our old nature is not repaired, or fixed up, but we receive an entirely new nature, completely apart from the old nature.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (II Corinthians 5:17)

This new nature is the very nature of God. Because it is the divine nature of God, it cannot sin, and because it cannot sin it cannot be lost. But the old nature is still there, and it CAN and DOES sin. For these sins there is forgiveness, upon confession and repentance. If these sins are not confessed and repented of it will bring the chastening hand of the Lord.

This new creation is controlled by our Head, Jesus Christ. Whatever happens to the Head, happens to the whole body. The Bible says:

“For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.” (Ephesians 5:30)

Christ is the Head of the Body, and the “Body of Christ “ is the family of God. What happens to the Head happens to all the members of the Body. For the Christian to be cast out would mean that Christ would have to be cast out, being a part of His body. If we were to use our human judgment of Christians today, and have some “saved” and then “lost again,” this would certainly cause the Body to be in sad shape indeed. If this doctrine alone was understood, it would clear up the confusion immediately.

Lack of understanding of what happens when a Christian sins has led to all sorts of opinions, one being, of course, the loss of salvation.

There are those who confuse the “gift” of salvation with the “rewards” which are given for faithfulness in service. Failure to separate these two Bible doctrines will leave one in a fog of uncertainty. There is an easy method of distinction between these two doctrines, clearly set forth in the Scriptures. Remember, salvation is always spoken of as being a “free gift,” without works. On the other hand, rewards are always spoken of as being earned. Rewards are worked for, as we see in Revelation.

“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me,  
to give to every man according as his work shall be.”  
(Revelation 22:12)

This is also stated in I Corinthians, chapter 3, verses 13 through 15.

“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. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”

This, again, is a case of rewards for faithful service, and has nothing whatsoever to do with salvation.

Another method that easily identifies the difference between salvation and rewards is that salvation is ALWAYS spoken of as being in the PRESENT; such as “hath” eternal life. Rewards are ALWAYS spoken of as being in the FUTURE.

The fourth mistake made by those who do not believe in the “security” of the believer is similar to confusing salvation with rewards, and that is confusing salvation with discipleship. This mistake will lead one to the conclusion that a saved person may lose their salvation.

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,  
and I WILL GIVE YOU REST.” (Matthew 11:28)

“I will GIVE you rest” is, of course, SALVATION. The next verse sets forth discipleship.

“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.” (Matthew 11:29)

The great commission, given to Christians, is for them to go with the gospel, and make believers, baptize them, and then make disciples of them. There are many, many believers, but few disciples. I am afraid that our problem today is trying to make disciples out of those who have never believed unto salvation, and that is an absolute

impossibility! First, they received the “free” gift of salvation, then discipleship was earned.

The word “disciple” means “discipline;” a disciplined Christian. This is earned through diligent work and commitment to the Holy Spirit. Salvation, which is a free gift, cannot be lost. However, discipleship, which is earned through works, may be lost. Lack of a clear understanding on this Bible teaching causes the confusion.

Many assert that Peter, after he was saved, was lost again. Read the record of Peter (Matthew chapter 26, verses 69 through 74). I know many of you are familiar with this portion of Scripture. In Matthew 26, verse 70, the Bible says that “he denied before them all...” In verse 72, it is stated that “he (Peter) denied with an oath, I do not know the man.” Verse 74 says, “Then he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man.” How much stronger language can be used to describe what Peter had done! Now for those who believe that Peter was lost again, at what point in this denial was Peter lost? Was it the first denial, the second denial, or the third denial?

Let us assume for a moment that Peter was lost. When was he saved again? Was he born again for the second time? Was it when he went out and wept bitterly? What sayeth the Scriptures on this subject? Now we must admit that Peter lost something. **BUT IT WAS NOT HIS SALVATION!** John chapter 21, verse 3, tells us what Peter lost.

“Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.” (John 21:3)

Jesus had told Peter that he was to no longer be a fisherman, but that he would be a “fisher of men,” and he was to follow Him; yet we see Peter going back to his old ways, his old profession, and his old life before he met the Master. Now does this indicate that Peter lost his salvation? **NO!** What Peter lost was his discipleship.

At the tomb, after Jesus had risen from the dead, a young man, sitting on the right side clothed in a white garment, told the ones who visited the tomb:

“...be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.” (Mark 16:6)

Then we read in verse 7:

“But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.” (Mark 16:7)

He told the ones who visited the tomb to go tell the disciples, **AND PETER**. Even though Peter denied Him three times, the Lord had not forgotten Peter. This incident took place **AFTER** Peter wept bitterly. Up to this time Peter had not been restored to

discipleship, yet we know, from the book of Acts, that he was restored to discipleship. When did this restoration take place? It is recorded in John, chapter 21.

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.” (John 21:15,16)

In verse 17 we read:

“He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.” (John 21:17)

Now, if you will remember, Peter denied the Lord THREE times publicly. Here he confesses Him THREE times publicly. Then, in the next book of the Bible (Acts), for the first six chapters, the most prominent man in the book is none other than the Apostle Peter.

Yes, Peter lost something, but it was not his SALVATION. He lost his DISCIPLESHIP. It is possible for me to lose my discipleship. It is possible for me to forfeit my ministry, but it is not possible to lose my salvation, because I am in the Father’s hand. My salvation is even reserved in Heaven for me. (I Peter, 1:4)

Before closing this series of messages on “the security of the believer,” we will look at some of the Scriptures that are used to teach that a saved person can eventually lose their salvation. Here is one Scripture that is often quoted.

“For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.” (II Peter 2:20-22)

Look very closely and see what the Scriptures really say. Does it say that the “sheep” has turned to its own vomit again? Does it say that the “sheep” has returned to its wallowing in the mire? Those of whom Peter is speaking are NOT SHEEP. They NEVER WERE SHEEP. They were “dogs” and “hogs.” The context of this Scripture plainly teaches that they were imposters; they were religious deceivers. They are called “wells without water,” and “clouds that are carried with a tempest to whom the midst of darkness is reserved forever.” (II Peter 2:17) The Scripture says:

“While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.”  
(II Peter 2:19)

These Scriptures do not teach that these people were saved no more than Judas Iscariot was saved. Judas certainly had more knowledge than the average person of his day. He walked and talked with the Saviour for three and a half years. We certainly could say of him that he had “escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The same is true of many today. Many have been raised in Christian homes, and been taught what the Bible says about Jesus Christ from infancy. They have been raised in Church, and certainly have “escaped the outward pollutions of this world,” yet have never been born again. There are thousands of people like this across the land. This could be true of you today.

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”  
(Matthew 7:15-20)

Jesus calls these people “wolves in sheep’s clothing.” Outwardly they all have the appearance of a Christian. They have all the foliage, the limbs, and maybe even some pretty blooms, but Jesus says that when harvest time comes we will see what they really are.

Another portion of Scripture, used by those who teach that it is possible for a saved person to lose their salvation is found in Matthew, chapter 7.

“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.  
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?  
And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you:  
depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:21-23)

Here again Jesus makes it very plain that HE NEVER KNEW THEM! He did not once know them and then forget them. He makes it very plain when He says, “I never knew you.”

Another Scripture that is prominently used is found in Matthew, chapter 12.

“When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he  
walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and  
findeth none,  
Then he saith, I will return unto my house from  
whence I came out; and when he is come, he  
findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.  
Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven  
other spirits more wicked than himself, and  
they enter in and dwell there: and the last state  
of that man is worse than the first. Even so  
shall it be also unto this wicked generation.”  
(Matthew 12:43-45)

Here again the Holy Spirit reveals to us plainly that this is nothing more than self-reformation. The Holy Spirit uses three words to teach, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that this was not regeneration. When the wicked spirit returned he found the house “empty,” “swept,” and “garnished.” This would not be the case had this house been the abode of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible says, “Christ must dwell in your heart by faith.” When the evil spirit returned, if he had found the house filled with the Holy Spirit, there would have been no room for even one demon to enter in.

One of the greatest promises given us, outside of salvation itself, is found in the fifth chapter of Romans.

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that,  
while we were sinners, Christ died for us.  
Much more then, being now justified by his blood,  
we shall be saved from wrath through him.  
For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled  
to God by the death of his Son, much more, being  
reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”  
(Romans 5:8-10)

The words “much more” are used twice to show us, and to give us comfort in the truth that God is “much more” interested in us after we are saved. Certainly we know that He was interested in us at the beginning, so when the words “much more” are used toward us after we are saved, it should be a comfort to every believer.

It is our prayer that these lessons will be of help to you. Most of all, if you are not saved, we pray that you will receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour right now. He will save you, keep you, and give you a sure home in Heaven, if you will receive Him.

“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.” (John 1:12)

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”  
(Revelation 3:20)