

Basic Bible Doctrine Study Series – Session 1

Salvation and Eternal Security

The idea for this study began a long time ago. Regardless of denomination, many, if not most Christians base what they believe about Christianity and the Bible on the word of the pastor, teacher or a family member instead of God's Word. The focus of this series of studies is to get you to the point where you know what you believe and why you believe it...based on the Word of God.

There are some Bible study tips that will help you not only with this series of studies but with any Bible study you undertake.

- There will always be portions of Scripture we won't be able to understand or interpret.
- The Bible will speak to us based on our Spiritual maturity level.
- The Bible doesn't need our help to be understood. Never add to or take away from what the Bible clearly states.
- What the Bible states simply and clearly can NEVER be contradicted by what may appear complicated and unclear.
- When the Bible uses words such as all, everyone, no one, etc.; there is no need for interpretation...they mean exactly what they say.

With that said, let's begin our study series and talk about the doctrines of salvation and eternal security.

SALVATION

We've discussed the topic of salvation many times but we will still take a bit of time and discuss it just so everyone is clear. Our discussion on salvation will go like this... What is it? Who needs it? How do we get it?

1. What is salvation?

Simply stated, salvation is deliverance from the God's judgment and the penalty of sin.

"...the lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire." Revelation 20:14-15

2. Who needs salvation?

According to Romans, everyone needs salvation because we are all sinful and the payment for sin is death...both physical and spiritual.

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned." Romans 5:12

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 6:23

3. How do we get salvation?

There are many ways to explain how to receive salvation. Many of you have heard of and used the Romans Road to Salvation. We’ve also discussed many times the A,B,C’s of Salvation. Whatever the presentation, the steps to receive God’s free gift of salvation are the same. We are saved, “by grace through faith” in Jesus Christ.

- 1) We must admit that we are sinful and in need of a savior.
- 2) We must be willing to turn from our lifestyle of sin (repentance).
- 3) We must believe that Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin and that God raised Him from the dead.
- 4) We must pray and ask Jesus to forgive and save us.

ETERNAL SECURITY

As Baptists, we believe in the eternal security of the believer. You may also hear this referred to as “once saved always saved.” Among all Christian denominations we are in the minority who believe this doctrine. In fact, there are those so strongly opposed to this teaching that refer to us as heretics and accuse us of preaching a false gospel. In our study, we are going to not only look at what we believe as Baptists based on God’s Word but also at some of the opposing viewpoints and reasons given as to why some think it’s possible for a Christian to become lost again after they’ve been saved.

One of the most detrimental things to being a successful, victorious Christian is a lack of assurance that you are saved. As long as satan can have Christians doubting whether or not they are really saved, he has them defeated. A Christian without the assurance of their salvation will NEVER be of any use to the cause of Christ. It’s amazing the number of people who are genuine believers...have had a genuine salvation experience and can’t say with complete certainty, “I know I’m going to heaven when I die.”

Charles Stanley in his study Understanding Eternal Security identified five categories of people in our world today.

1. Those who are unsaved and know they are unsaved. They have no security regarding their eternal future.
2. Those who are unsaved but think they are saved. They have a false security about eternity.
3. Those who are saved but are uncertain about whether they are saved. They are insecure.

4. Those who believe they were saved in the past, or even the present, but who are unsure about their salvation in eternity. They have a feeling of security in the here and now, but they are not “eternally” secure.
5. Those who are certain that they have been saved, are saved, and will be saved forever. They are the ones who are “eternally secure” in their salvation experience.

* Understanding Eternal Security, Dr. Charles Stanley, Introduction – Page vii *

“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.” 1 John 5:13

Why is it important that we understand and believe that we are eternally saved?

First and foremost it means that my salvation is in no way dependent on me or anything I do. My involvement was simply reaching out and taking the free gift that God offered. If you believe that your salvation was by any means other than what Jesus did at Calvary then you believe that in some way your salvation is dependent on your will and your works.

It also means that since getting saved was not dependent on me then staying saved and getting to heaven are not dependent on me either. Jesus saved me initially, keeps me saved now and has guaranteed my future salvation in heaven.

It is important that we understand and believe in the doctrine of eternal security because to think there is something else required for salvation other than following the A,B,C’s of salvation or to think there is something we can do (or not do) that will cost us our salvation is to make salvation about works. There are those who teach that baptism, church membership, speaking in tongues and many other things are necessary in order to be saved. There are also those who teach that suicide, homosexuality, apostasy and many other things can cause a Christian to “lose” their salvation.

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

“In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither the height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:37-39

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who

through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:3-5

Which of my sins did Jesus die for and forgive?

Simply stated...all of them. According to Hebrews and 1 Peter, Jesus was the perfect sacrifice. He made one sacrifice for all people for all time.

"Such a high priest truly meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself." Hebrews 7:26-27

"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit." 1 Peter 3:18

To believe that Jesus died for or forgave only the sins you confessed means that more sacrifice for sin is still needed. 2000 years ago Jesus went to Calvary and He will never go there again. Jesus was the perfect sacrifice and the only sacrifice that could pay the price for our sin.

"First he said, 'Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them'—though they were offered in accordance with the law. Then he said, 'Here I am, I have come to do your will.' He sets aside the first to establish the second. And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool. For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy." Hebrews 10:8-14

How can I know for sure I am eternally secure?

We know for sure based on the promises He's made to us in His Word. Remember what John wrote in 1 John 5:13, "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life." We look to the Bible for assurance that we will spend all eternity with Him in heaven. Also notice that scripture is very, very clear as to what it takes to get saved. Salvation is so important to God that He sent His only Son to purchase it for us. If there was some way we could no longer be saved after becoming a Christian, He would have told us that very, very clearly in His Word.

"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12

“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.” John 5:24

“For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.” John 6:40

“Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life.” John 6:47

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.”
John 10:27-29

“If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, ‘Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.’” Romans 10:9-11

Not only do we have God’s Word but we have God’s Spirit. Paul teaches us that the Holy Spirit indwells us as Christians and guarantees our future salvation in heaven.

“For no matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ. And so through him the ‘Amen’ is spoken by us to the glory of God. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come” 2 Corinthians 1:22

“And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.” Ephesians 1:13-14

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” Ephesians 4:30

Remember this Bible study tip from the beginning of our lesson...what the Bible states simply and clearly can NEVER be contradicted by what may appear complicated and unclear.