

ETERNAL SECURITY

“ONCE SAVED, ALWAYS SAVED”

God has boundaries. In Deuteronomy 19:14, He very clearly commands, *“Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor’s landmark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it.”* Then in 27:17, He adds a curse for doing so: *“Cursed be he that removeth his neighbor’s landmark.”*

One of Satan’s primary strategies to dismantle the Church is to take a doctrine clearly of God and stretch it out to make it ridiculously something it is not. He delights in moving God’s boundaries – “landmarks” – and casting confusion among the brethren.

One such doctrine is “THE ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER.”

The first thing Satan will do is to give the doctrine an unflattering nickname, in this case he calls it “Once Saved, Always Saved.” Then he substitutes a heretical, satanic doctrine to it to displace God’s Truth. Again, in this case he interprets HIS doctrine as “once you get ‘saved,’ you can live anyway you want to.” And there you have it; the “ancient landmark” boundaries have been moved so far, the truth of THE ETERNAL SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER is mocked into irrelevance. Rock solid pastors have been known to preach both sides of the controversy.

The most obvious predicate of this most important doctrine of the faith is that one must first be “soundly saved,” as the old evangelicals would state it. This requires that one has experienced the “New Birth” in the Spirit. Jesus’ reply to Nicodemus’ inquiry was that he, a high-ranking religious teacher and leader of the Jews, must be “Born Again” – TWICE He mandated the New Birth to enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:3&7).

Salvation is a divine work of the Holy Spirit. He ALONE convicts a sinner of his lostness.

Unfortunately, too many well-meaning individuals try to be amateur holy spirits and do the convicting in their flesh. “Turn or BURN!” *“I don’t want that to happen! Where do I sign up?”*

No evidence of any *“godly sorrow that leads to repentance.”* (2 Cor. 7:10)

The other side of that approach is “Just walk down the magic aisle, say the magic prayer and go through the magic water and you will go to heaven when you die.” Again, too much evangelism is on **“saying”** ‘The Sinner’s Prayer,’ and not on sincerely PRAYING the sinner’s prayer. No preacher can assure anyone of their salvation.

“New Birth” Salvation is a LEGAL TRANSACTION made in Heaven between a repentant sinner, realizing that he is an enemy of Holy God and has nothing to offer for his crimes, and

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God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit draws the sinner with all his sin to the table to plead to Jesus, solely trusting in His substitutionary death on the Cross of Calvary for payment of his sins. Jesus, as our Great High Priest, offers His sinless blood to God the Father on the sinner's behalf. God the Father accepts Jesus' offering of His blood and pardon's every sin – past, present and future – of the former sinner, who is now adopted into the family of God. *“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry ‘Abba! Father!’”* (Romans 8:15) ***“Now He which established us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”*** (2Cor. 1:21-22)

Decades back, my wife and I adopted a little girl who was just over 4 years old. We were given an appointment to appear before the judge of the county in which we lived to be interrogated about our decision to adopt. When we were called into his chambers, she walked into that room as “a ward of the State of Georgia.” The judge asked us several questions about our commitment to take care of her and provide and protect her and then WITH THE STROKE OF HIS PEN, she walked out of his office as MY DAUGHTER!!

We thought everything was over, but about a month later we received a letter from the Secretary of State of Georgia. Quite puzzled, we opened this very official looking letter to find a NEW BIRTH certificate!! Oh, it still had her original birth date, gender, race, eye color, birth weight and length, hospital where she was born - - -

But she had a NEW NAME!!

And she had a NEW FATHER!!

Now, I wish I could report that everything worked out like a Cinderella story, but it didn't. After getting married in our home and having three beautiful children, she decided she was a Viking and left her children with her husband and I have no idea where she is today. But that of which I am totally sure is, **she is still my daughter!**

The Parable of the Prodigal Son is not just in the Bible to take up space. It is GOD'S FAITHFULNESS to us, not our faithfulness to our Father that keeps us Eternally Secure!

One final teaching. I believe the most misunderstood word in the New Testament is the word “Believe.” We can all quote John 3:16, *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, shall not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

When God convicted me of this possibility, I went to a seasoned pastor I trusted and asked him what that word “believe” really meant. He told me the Greek word translated as “believe” was “**pisteuo**,” which meant “to Trust AND Obey!” and it involves more than just a mental ascent, but a decision of the heart and will. Die to self, live for Christ Jesus!

So, let us be faithful and trustworthy evangelists making certain that Jesus' offer and God's response is solid and authentic and not just filling our pews with deceived lost people. For we shall all one day give an account and us shepherds to a higher level.