

Vision International Church  
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Eternal Assurance  
[www.vichurch.org](http://www.vichurch.org)

*It's important to understand that God is most attracted to us when we realize how unattractive our sin is to HIM.*

### **Isaiah 64:6**

But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousness *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

### **Galatians 3:3**

Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

### **Can a person be saved and then lose their salvation?**

Eternal assurance carries many descriptions:

- “Once saved, always saved”
- “The Security of the believer”
- “Perseverance of the saints” (TULIP model for Calvinist)
- “Assurance of salvation”

### **Let's Define Protection**

- “Insurance” – to protect against loss or damage
- “Ensure” – to make sure or certain, guarantee, secure, make safe
- “Assurance” – being secure, confident, certain

### **A Need of Certainty**

- We all want to feel certain and safe
- There is no greater need than to feel and to know certain things about our spiritual lives and destinies

### **Can a Christian really know for sure that they have eternal life and then lose their salvation?**

- The Bible says, YES to the first part, NO to the second
- I John 5:13 – “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”
- To know you are saved is critical and is EVERYTHING!
- This definitive knowledge of salvation changes everything a knowledge and is not just a guess, a hope, or a feeling

### **Contextualization**

- Always remember to study the larger context of a passage and not just read one verse
- Let's take an honest look at what Scripture really says
- To understand whether assurance and certainty concerning salvation are possible, one must understand what salvation is and how it takes place

### **Where there is uncertainty concerning how salvation is attained, there will be confusion concerning whether it can be maintained:**

- Many make false assumptions about salvation that lead people astray
- Some seem to believe that we earn or deserve salvation if we do enough good
- Remember, man does not deserve eternal life with God at all
- All mankind has sinned
- Sin is an affront, a rebellion against God
- Sin MUST be punished
- We are unable to deal with sin on our own
- We need God's grace and mercy
- Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-9 – “But God who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”
- Salvation is by grace not by works
- We cannot save ourselves
- This is also the key to the assurance of salvation being maintained
- We cannot save ourselves; neither can we unsave ourselves.

- Salvation is not within our power; losing it is not either
- Salvation just does not work that way (meaning we can attain or lose within ourselves)
- Salvation is based on the atoning work of Christ; not Christ plus\_\_\_\_\_.
- If we say we contribute to attaining or maintaining salvation, we have added to grace and belief in Jesus

### **Saved, Being Saved and Will be Saved**

- I am saved at the moment of conversion justification and redemption
- I am being saved and preserved by the Holy Spirit – sanctification
- I will be saved and live forever with God - glorification

### **If my good works cannot save me, how do my bad works unsave me?**

- If my bad works can cost me my salvation, at what point is it lost? One sin? Two sins? Three? All sins? A really “bad” sin? A habit of sinning?
- Who defines this line? Where in Scripture is this exact point defined?
- If this were the case, isn’t it interesting we receive no specific or even general warning in Scripture about such a vital line in the sand?
- The Bible is full of detailed instructions of how one becomes a child of God; if that process could be reversed, doesn’t it make sense that at least one writer would have gone into equal detail explaining how that happened as well?
- Salvation is not based on some holy scale where if the good outweighs the bad we make it “in”.
- All other world religions are based on this works-based righteousness foundation (we as believers are not)
- Our salvation is neither attained or maintained in this way
- Romans 6:23 –“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- Even my ability to trust in, to believe in, to have faith in Him, is a gift from Him (faith is a gift)
- Romans 12:3 –“For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you; not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”
- If our salvation hinges on anything but the finished work of Christ on the cross, we are in trouble.
- “If Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, and yet we can somehow become unsaved – and therefore undo what Christ came to do – would it not be wise for God to take us on to heaven the moment we are saved in order to insure we make it? Isn’t it unnecessarily risky to force us to stay here?” Charles Stanley

**Let Scripture paint a very clear image of how secure salvation really is:**

- II Corinthians 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”
- We are covered by His blood
- When God looks at us He sees the work and righteousness of the Son
- His righteousness has been imputed to us; put into our account
- Our sin has been credited to Him
- Check out the relationship of our position in Christ: John 10:28-29 –“And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.
- Literally meaning and I keep on giving to them age abiding life, and not never (strong!) shall they be destroyed unto the age and not anything shall snatch them out of my hand.
- My Father who ‘has’ given (perfect tense = completed work) to me is greater than all and no one is powerful to snatch out of the Father’s hand.”
- We do not hold on to God and salvation; He holds on to us and maintains our salvation.
- No sin we commit is powerful enough to open His hand and snatch us out.
- No sin we commit surprises God (God never text messages OMG)
- For which sins did Jesus die on the cross? ALL of them
- For which sins were you forgiven when you trusted Him as Savior? ALL of them
- The timing of your sins is irrelevant since they were all in the future from the perspective of the cross. (Remember God is not restricted by time)
- Jesus died for all the sins I have ever committed and will commit today or tomorrow
- If our salvation is not secure, how could Jesus say about those to whom He gives eternal life, “and they shall never perish” in John 10:28?
- If even one man or woman receives eternal life and then forfeits it through sin they will make Jesus a liar.
- “Does it make any sense to say that salvation is offered as a solution for our sin and then to turn around and teach that salvation can be taken away because of our sin as well?” - Charles Stanley
- Colossians 3:34 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”
- “is hidden” = perfect tense = completed work: It carries the idea of a lock
- We are locked in with Christ

- We would have to be more powerful than the Father and the Son to get out of HIS hands
- Then see Ephesians 1:13-14 –“In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of your inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.”
- “sealed” = mark of possession; the signet ring in wax; sealed for security and preservation
- We are sealed with the Holy Spirit, guaranteed!
- When God seals a believer, He makes them His own possession
- The seal is permanent
- The seal marks us for redemption
- “guarantee of your inheritance” = earnest money; money given in advance as security

#### **We are purchased possessions of God**

- I Corinthians 6:20 –“For you were bought at a price...”
- II Corinthians 1:21-22 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.”
- Romans 8:9 – But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.”
- We know we are Christians by the presence of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)
- A true believer is promised, sealed, hidden, locked tightly in the hand of God
- To break free from that grasp is to be more powerful than the Triune God
- How dare we assume to have the authority, power or propensity to unsave!
- Assurance does not mean we are free to live a sinful life however

#### **Genuine salvation is a life-changing experience**

- Not spiritual perfection but a desire and intentionality not to sin
- We must mourn over sin
- Romans 6:12 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?”
- Entire chapter deals with a question
- Contextually it speaks of not allowing sin to have dominion over us any longer; of being dead to sin and alive in Christ.
- We may fall into sin but not out of our salvation

- We may lose our fellowship with God but not our relationship
- We must understand the difference between these two concepts
- One is a daily roller coaster; the other is a certainty
- We have been adopted
- Romans 8:15-16 –“For you have not received a Spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a Spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, ‘Abba Father!’ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”
- Ephesians 1:3-5 –“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.”
- Why would God choose before the foundation of the world to adopt someone He knew He would eventually have to unadopt?
- A parent cannot change the fact that any of their children have been born
- Even if they rebel and deny their parents; they are still your children. The relationship does not change although the fellowship may go up and down.
- Neither does God change the fact that we have been born again
- If we say we can lose our salvation, we are saying God does not have the power to hold and keep His own.

### **What about Hypocrites?**

- The problem is we see those who claim Christ and then habitually do not live for Him
- Either, they have never truly believed and been saved, or they pretend they do not believe.
- People in those categories are the most miserable people in the world because Holy Spirit lives within them and they fight Him
- They are under constant conviction
- We all struggle with sin
- None of us are perfect
- Romans 7 –read it –from Paul
- Verse 15 –“For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.”
- I John 1:8-9 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is

faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

- We do good works, not to be saved, or to maintain our salvation; we do good works **because** we are saved!
- Ephesians 2:10 –“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”
- We are saved to become His disciples
- There is no such thing as discretionary discipleship
- James 2:26 –“As the body without the Spirit is dead so faith without works is dead also.”
- The carnal lifestyles of professing believers make the doctrine of assurance difficult
- The lack of church discipline and an insufficient understanding of sin and salvation add to this.
- Being a church member does not mean you are saved
- I John 2:19 –“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that it might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”
- Many believe about Jesus but not in Him
- Romans 8:35-39 –“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword?...Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am through Him who loved us. 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 **created thing**, shall be able to separate us from the love of God be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- I am a “created thing” – not even I can separate me from the love of God!
- John 5:24 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”
- Present tense = already done
- John 6:47 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.”
- “has” is present tense = already done
- II Timothy 1:12 –“For this reason I also suffer these things, nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.”

### **Can a person be saved and then lose their salvation?**

- A person can be saved only by the blood of Jesus Christ
- A person truly saved, cannot be lost again
- We should celebrate His grace and love and actively share the gospel