

The Promise of Eternal Security

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[0 : 00] We're doing salvation God's way still.

We're finishing up probably before the first of the year.! I won't promise, but I think we will.! We are getting close to the end, but we've got some exciting things coming.

I'm looking at a bunch of stuff. You know, I've discovered over the years that if you are focusing on a particular Bible subject, you will come across passages that illuminate that subject.

But you may be focusing on election, sanctification, a host of other topics, and there's plenty.

And you've read these verses for years, and suddenly they seem to come to life. And it's like a whole new meaning. Like you've never seen it before, although you know you've read it.

[1 : 16] I have found this to be true of the subject of eternal security of the true believer or perseverance of the saints.

And by the way, saints, you understand, are true believers, right? You know that. Well, what Dr. McGee said, if you're a saint, you ain't an ain't. But if you ain't a saint, you're an ain't.

He had a way with words. A number of years ago, I was focusing on the subject matter of eternal security of the true believer in my private study at home.

And I read that great and very familiar passage in Matthew. I tell you, you are Peter. And on this rock, I will build my church.

And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Now, just as almost an aside, he didn't tell Peter, Peter, on you, I'm going to build my church.

[2 : 17] And the church at Rome has lost that. They think that they did. What he's telling Peter, Peter gave a declaration that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And he said, on that foundation, I will build my church. Well, because I was focusing at that particular time of study on eternal security, I saw that passage in a new light.

The church spoken of by the Lord in that verse is not brick and mortar. It's not brick and mortar.

Guys, there's going to come a time when all this is gone.

All this will be gone. And there was something here before this was here. And actually, when we first started 80 plus years ago, we met in a bar. And then they built a little building and they've added to it and whatever.

But it's not brick and mortar. The church is people. Christ is saving a people for his namesake, bringing them into the church, bringing worshipers, eternal worshipers of him.

[3 : 25] The gates of hell itself will assault them, but will not prevail against these people.

That is one of the strongest statements on eternal security in the Word of God. And you never see that verse put in witness tracks or comments on eternal security.

That's a very strong gates of hell are not going to prevail against the church. It's going to be buffeted and bruised and bloodied, but not defeated.

So for our purposes this evening, we're going to begin, and I underline that word begin. We're not going to get very far. We're going to begin to look at what many believe to be the four key texts on the believer's security.

But there are many more passages than these, but these are somewhat foundational. Two of these portions of Scripture come from the lips of Jesus and the other two from the pen of Paul.

[4 : 39] And the first one, for our purposes, is John chapter 6, one of my very favorite chapters in all the Bible. And when we come to that chapter, we see Jesus, and the Word of God records all this, but we see Jesus engaging in some amazing work in the whole chapter.

The first of these is referred to as the feeding of the 5,000. And I think most theologians are in agreement that number refers to the men who were present and were fed.

Many theologians like to point out that with the addition of women and children, which probably would not have been counted in that number, it is more likely that the Lord produced food for 20,000 people.

That is absolutely staggering. It's staggering. You had a sit-down dinner for 20,000 people. We need to call this miracle for what it is.

I know there was a little basket, and a little boy brought a little basket, but that didn't go very far. Jesus created food.

[6 : 12] He created food. We see the Trinity working to accomplish creation in the universe.

We're going to talk about that, but here we see Jesus creating food. How could he do that? Well, he could do it because he's the creator. The Bible names him as the creator.

And the other members of the Trinity had their parts also, but Jesus is called the creator. We have here a creative act of the second person of the Trinity.

Now, we all understand that the universe was created by God. We see the Trinity working to accomplish creation in the universe.

We see the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit all working together. You see the three members of the Trinity in like the first four verses of Genesis, chapter 1. They're all there.

[7 : 11] But Jesus is specifically described as the creator. In a number of passages, John chapter 1, verse 1 to 3, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. You catch that last one?

Without Him, not anything made was made. And that takes us right back to the beginning, to Genesis. In the beginning, God.

That's in the beginning, Elohim. We don't have a real good translation of Elohim. I read one of the old divine theologians of many centuries ago, and he said, the closest you can come is, in the beginning, we, the one true God.

Mentioning the Trinity there, but there's one God. We, the one true God. And you see the Holy Spirit in those verses, hovering, brooding over the waters.

[8 : 24] But you see Jesus. How did the universe, how was it created? And God said, and God said, and God said.

How did He say? He used words. Who's the Word? It tells you right there in John 1. Jesus Christ is the Word. Colossians 1, 15 to 17, He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities.

All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. We could spend a couple months in this verse, these three verses.

Now, we need to be clear about something. He uses the words, He and Him, in these three verses, seven times. That's the Lord Jesus Christ.

[9 : 32] He's talking about the Lord. And do not get hung up on that word, firstborn. We know the Lord is eternal. He's the eternal God. He was not created.

Firstborn is better translated, the preeminent one. He is the preeminent one. At the end of verse 17, it says that the Lord Jesus is holding everything together.

It's an amazing verse. The writer of the book of Hebrews says that He, Jesus, upholds all things by the word of His power. And I love Dr. MacArthur's footnote on that passage.

He says the universe and everything in it is constantly sustained, underline that thought constantly, by the Son's powerfully effective word.

The term also conveys the concept of movement or progress. The Son of God directs all things toward the consummation of all things according to God's sovereign purpose.

[10 : 39] He who spoke all things into existence also sustains His creation and consummates His purpose by His word. He's holding this thing together.

I heard one guy say, a theologian, he said, you know, the universe has within it the power to destroy itself. And it takes the restraining hand of Christ for it not to do that.

Someday it will. We'll have the uncreation and then a recreation. Scientists know that about 80% of the universe is made up of something that cannot be seen or observed.

Can't see it? Can't look at it with a telescope? And I got a new telescope if y'all want to come up and really see the stars and the planets come up sometime.

They couldn't figure out what do we call this? We can't see it, but we know it's there. Well, they came up and signers aren't real creative, I don't think, but let's call it dark matter.

[11:47] We know it's matter, but we can't see it, so it's dark matter. It's the mysterious glue that, this is their words, that holds everything together in the universe.

They know it is there based upon physics, astronomy, and mathematics. They can tell from the movement of the heavenly bodies, it's there.

But they can't come up with a better name than dark matter. I think, this is personal, we should call dark matter that holds everything together by the given name, the Lord Jesus Christ.

You think that might stir things at some of the universities and museums around the world? Now, we're kind of circling the past.

We're going to get back to our point here on eternal security. But the point is, it was easy for God who made everything in the universe and keeps it all together to create food for 20,000 people.

[12:52] And He did that in John chapter 6. The Lord also turned the laws of physics and gravity on its head by walking on water in the same chapter.

Turned them on its head. As the sovereign Lord, He merely suspended gravity for a few moments. Does He have a right to do that?

No, He created it. You bet He does. With these two amazing miracles as the chapter introduction, the Lord then reveals to the masses of people assembly that He's the great I Am and that He is the bread of life.

Here's our focal passage. A little lengthy, but this is the Word of God. On the next day, after the food and all, on the next day, the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw there had only been one boat there and Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples.

Remember, He sent Him on their way to Capernaum and they didn't see Jesus get in the boat. But His disciples, they watched them and they sailed off alone.

[14:10] Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into the boats and they went to Capernaum seeking Jesus.

Why'd they do that? They're now staunch believers? No. They're hungry. They wanted another meal. When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, Rabbi, when did you come here?

Jesus answered them, truly, truly, I say to you, you're seeking Me not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.

Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life. There's that word. Mark it down. Because that's what Jesus is talking about.

eternal life which the Son of Man will give to you. For on Him, God the Father has set his seal. His seal. Then they said to Him, what must we do to be doing the works, plural, of God?

[15:21] And Jesus answered them, this is the work, singular, of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent. So they said to Him, and boy, I mean, if you want to get me fighting mad, this verse just...

So they said to Him, then what sign do you do that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform?

Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness. As it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. By the way, that He there is Moses to the crowd.

Jesus then said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives way gives life to the world.

They said to Him, Sir, give us this bread always. They're still thinking of those loaves. It was good. Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to Me shall not hunger and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst.

[16:41] But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe all, listen to this, all that the Father gives Me will come to Me.

By the way, the Reformers called that irresistible grace. They had a word for it. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me and whoever comes to Me I will never cast out.

Of those who come to Him, who's He going to cast out? None. Never. For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

And this is the will of Him who sent Me that I should lose nothing of all that He has given Me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life.

There's that word. And I will raise Him up on the last day. And again, if I'm not careful, I can get really mad at this point. Jesus created food for a sit-down dinner for 20,000 people.

[17 : 58] They ate their fill. They weren't hungry anymore. And they had 12 baskets of food left over, which Jesus told the disciples, gather that up.

Why'd they gather that up? Disciples had a really nice breakfast the next morning. 12 baskets of food. And then the disciples journeyed by boat across the lake.

Jesus stays behind. Then the Lord disappears and no one saw Him go. There were no other boats. But He shows up on the other side of the lake.

He walks on water. The masses didn't see Him do this, but you could bet they heard about it. How could you keep your mouth quiet after seeing that? And this is why I get angry.

These guys, by the way, going across the lake, that was... Only God can do that. And these guys have the audacity to ask, what sign will you give us so we can believe in you?

[19 : 15] The Lord tells them that He's the bread of life and He's come down from heaven. And those listening begin to brag about what Moses did for them.

You all remember Moses, don't you? The murderer? The guy that killed the Egyptian? If you go to an Orthodox Jew and ask Him who is the greatest Jew that ever lived?

He will not say Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. Neither will He say one of the prophets. He will not mention King David. He's certainly not going to mention the Lord Jesus.

The Orthodox will say Moses. That's true to this day and has been true through the generations. To this day and all through history, Moses is held in the highest regard by the Jewish people.

When I first heard that question, I thought it would be Abraham. But it wasn't. It came in about fifth. Pretty amazing. They say in verse 31, Our fathers ate the man in the wilderness.

[20 : 26] You remember how long they were in the wilderness? Forty years. That's what they're saying. Our fathers ate the man in the wilderness.

Manna means, what is it? It came. They ate it. They didn't know what it was. As it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

And most people pass over that verse and give it scant consideration. But it is an infuriating passage. What did the Jews just tell the Son of Glory, the incarnate God of the universe?

Moses fed us every day for forty years. You've given us one meal and you expect us to entrust ourselves to you? What else are you going to give us?

That's the human experience, isn't it? That's the human family right there. What am I going to get out of this? And then Jesus explained to them the truth.

[21 : 33] He says to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, is not Moses who gave you bread from heaven? But my Father gives you the true bread from heaven for the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

And that's when they said to him, Sir, give us this bread always. But he told them, Moses didn't give you one crumb. And of course, now they want this bread.

But again, what's their motive? If we follow this guy, we can get three square meals a day. But Jesus is in the business of giving eternal life, so he then explains to them how they can receive it. He tells them how they can persevere as saints, and that's the very topic we're studying. The word believe in Greek there is the word pistou.

It means to believe, have faith, trust, entrust, or be persuaded. One Greek authority said to have bestowed in Christ means you commit your life to him.

[22 : 44] Pretty strong. If you have that level of belief, you will be granted eternal life, and Christ will raise you up on the last day. And by the way, that last day is coming.

And then the Lord Jesus gives them this hair-raising statement, you have seen me, and yet do not believe. Seen him do all those things, but you don't believe.

All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me, I'll never cast out, for I've come down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last

day, for this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

They had seen him, they had seen the great miracles, they still didn't believe. They still didn't believe. then he tells them about the elective work of the Father.

And it's a two-fold statement. Part one, all that the Father gives me will come to me. That's a marvelous statement. If you've been given to Christ by the Father, you will come to Christ.

[24 : 12] I'm most reminded of the guy that said, you know, I think I might be one of God's elect. I'm going to go out here and sit on this stump, in my woods, near my house, and wait and see if God saves me.

And I promise you that guy, if he didn't do anything other than that, went down to hell. That's not what it's saying.

But this is a marvelous statement. If you've been given to Christ, you will come, by the Father, by the way, you will come to Christ. If you never come to Christ, you've never been given to Him by the Father.

There's further good news. This is part two. Whoever comes to me, I will never cast out. Can you take, can you sleep at night with that verse?

Whoever comes to me, I will never cast out. That's mind-boggling. As Spurgeon said, and Mike referred to this, and I think my wife's the one that sent it to him, but Charles Spurgeon said, among the lost souls in hell, there is not one who can say, I went to Jesus and He refused me.

[25 : 32] He sent me away. He said, no, you're not one of mine, you can't come in. No one in hell will ever be able to say that. And Jesus then gives perhaps the greatest news ever.

He told the assembled masses of people, He came to do the will of the Father. And what is that will?

And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose nothing at all that He has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes, Pistuo in trust commits, in Him should have eternal life and I will raise Him up on the last day.

Brothers, that's eternal life. That's eternal life. And this, you would think, had been greeted with this statement with applause and cheers.

Maybe they put Jesus on their shoulders and paraded Him around. He just told us we're going to have eternal life. What did they do?

[26 : 49] And what did they say? So the Jews, when He said that, grumbled about Him. Golly!

I think if Jesus were using our vernacular, He'd say, give me a break. They grumbled about Him. What angered them so?

Why did they grumble? Because He said, I am the bread that came down from heaven. They had an answer for that.

They said, is not this Jesus the son of Joseph? Remember Joseph the carpenter?

whose father and mother we know. We know Joseph and Mary. We watched him grow up. How does He now say, I have come down from heaven?

[27 : 54] We know this guy's parents. We watched him grow up. Now He tells us, no, I came down from heaven. And we kind of deduce this grumbling was mostly in their hearts.

or in their minds. It wasn't, I don't think, overt, you know, and they were about to seize him and throw him off the cliff. They did that earlier and didn't get very far.

They were thinking all this. Who is this guy? That was the grumbling. And I love this because Jesus says, do not grumble among yourselves.

He knew what everyone was thinking, didn't he? Jesus knows your every thought down to and including the subconscious. That doesn't sometimes give me great peace, but it's nevertheless true. It's true. they're apparently not grumbling out loud so much as they're grumbling in their minds and hearts. Jesus is the omnipotent God.

[28 : 58] He knows our speech and our thoughts down to this subconscious, and then he adds fuel to the fire of the unbelievers in the crowd, which was the vast majority of people. So let's listen to him add some fuel to the fire.

By the way, I'm in verse 44 now, chapter 6. No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day.

It is written in the prophets, and they will all be taught by God. Everyone who has heard and learned from the father comes to me, not that anyone has seen the father, except he was from God, and he's already told him, I came from heaven.

He has seen the father. Truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. There we have it again, eternal life. That's what we're talking about. You notice a pattern here?

Jesus frequently talks about eternal life. He mentions eternal life over and over. Care to guess how many times in the Bible the Lord uses the words conditional life?

[30 : 26] That you're saved, but you would be correct if you guessed absolutely zero. He came to give eternal life to those who believe, who are given to him by the father.

Again, whoever believes and trusts, commits, has eternal life. And again, it's not rocket science. I'm the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness.

That's stuff they said Moses gave them, but it was really God. And guess what? They died. How many of them died in the wilderness? All those guys.

Every adult that left Egypt died in the wilderness. Their bones were bleaching in the desert. And I've been over there. It's hot. This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die.

I'm the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.

[31 : 39] Now the crowd really turns hostile. They are really mad. Remember, this is the one he fed, took care of them.

They're really mad now. Because he says, you know, he's talking about whoever eats of this bread and this is the bread I will give them for the life of the world is my flesh.

He's giving them his flesh to eat. And the crowd of unbelievers are so hostile they immediately deduce, he's talking about cannibalism. Of course he's not.

That's prohibited, guys. A dispute arose among them, so Jesus says, okay, it's time to pour it on.

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat?

So Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

[32 : 54] For my flesh is true food, my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me.

This is the bread that came down from heaven, that's Jesus, not like the bread the fathers ate and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.

And then he who is eternal life, gives the words of eternal life. Jesus says this, or it's recorded by the Holy Spirit, when many of his disciples, the word there is followers, not necessarily Peter and James and John, but the followers, people were following him, all these thousands of people, they were hungry.

many of his followers heard this and they said, this is a hard thing, who can listen to it?

They didn't even talk about, you know, acting on it, they just said, who can listen to these words from this guy? But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, do you take offense at this?

[34 : 34] Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? And several of them would see that. It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh is no help at all.

The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life, but there are some of you who do not believe. Now, he's talking to the inner circle now.

For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and he also knew who was going to betray him. And I doubt if Judas Iscariot even knew at that point he was going to betray him.

But Jesus knew it. And he said, this is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the father.

That starts to make more and more sense, doesn't it? The Lord reiterates that no one can come to him unless they are drawn or granted by the father.

[35 : 40] It's the Lord's permissive will, the father's permissive will, which brings us to the saddest passage in the scriptures of the Bible. Because John 6:66, and let's don't play on 6:66, but the

verses and chapters were put in 400 AD, but in John 666, after this, what?

After what he just said, feeding on me, my flesh, my blood, after this, many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him.

and I promise you every one of those that turned and went back are alive tonight crying out, why did I walk away?

Why did I walk away? In walking away from Jesus, they walked away from their only hope of eternal life. the only one.

So Jesus turns to the 12, 11 believers and Judas, Judas Iscariot. There's two Judas's, Judas Iscariot. Do you want to go away as well?

[37 : 05] Simon Peter answered him and says, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. there's that word again.

It has different names, my brothers. Eternal life, everlasting life, once truly saved, always saved. Perseverance of the saints, preservation of the saints. When you are drawn to the Son by the Father, he saves you forever.

Satan will buff it and bruise and bloody, but he cannot steal that which God has given you. He can't touch it. So I'm going to close this evening, almost 40 minutes.

Probably get there before I close. I close with it, and this is powerful. It's not powerful because I say it. I don't have any power.

[38 : 17] It is powerful because the almighty God, the great I am, Yahweh, the creator, redeemer, and sustainer of the universe, the dark matter, the glue, that holds even electrons in their orbits, so they don't fly off, said this.

I've already read it, but I'm going to read it in a new light. starting in verse 37, all that the father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me, I will never cast out, for I've come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me, that's the father, and this is the will of the father who sent me, now listen, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day, for this is the will of my father, that everyone who looks on the son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.

Here we have a promise made by the second person of the trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ, fully God, co-equal, co-eternal with the father and the spirit.

it's a promise made by the second person of trinity, to the first person of the trinity, in the presence of the third person of the trinity, Jesus makes a promise to the father that he will save and keep saved all that the father gives him.

A promise from Christ to the father. By the way, those that are given are called the elect of God.

[40 : 11] And trust me, that's a word hated by many in the church today in the world. The question really to ponder, why has the church debated the doctrine of eternal security for generations and centuries?

I mean, how can we read that? Jesus promises the father, I'm not going to lose any. Now, in another book, it says, well, he lost Judas.

Yeah, Judas wasn't a believer. He didn't lose anything. He says, I'm not going to lose any. He made that promise to the father. That settles it. There's no debate.

That settles it. Now, he makes another promise in the tenth chapter of John. There, the Lord Jesus makes a promise to the recipients of eternal life.

And many of you are turning there. Hold your place until next week. Because that's when we're going to cover that promise. So, you've got two promises here we're working on.

[41 : 29] You've got one of them. be thinking about the other one.