

Matthew 7:21-23 (Roy A. Huebner) 171957

Eternal Security: A Few Objections to Eternal Security Considered, Few Objections to Eternal Security Considered, A

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Scripture quotations are cited from the translation by J. N. Darby unless otherwise indicated.

MATTHEW 7:21-23.

Not every one who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he that does the will of my Father who is in the heavens. Many shall say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied through thy name, and through thy name cast out demons, and through thy name done many works of power? and than I will avow unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, workers of lawlessness.

Who are these self-styled "miracle" workers? They profess to know the Lord. "Lord, Lord," they say.

They thus claim consideration from Him. We have done all these things in Thy name, they claim. With what solemn and final words He answers: "I NEVER KNEW YOU. Depart from me, workers of lawlessness." What a shock this will be for these wonder workers. How could He say I NEVER KNEW YOU if these are persons who were once saved and then lost again?

My sheep hear my voice, and I KNOW THEM, and they follow me; and I give unto them life eternal; and they shall never perish, and no one shall seize them out of my hand. (John 10:27, 28).

Concerning His sheep, Christ says, I KNOW THEM. If you say that Matt. 7:21-23 refers to Lost again Christians, then you are guilty of treating the Lord as a Liar when He said to them I NEVER KNEW YOU. Those 'miracle' workers never were the Lord's sheep. They professed to know Him but it was not real. Beware! These people are disguised as 'Christians', they claim to work miracles, but Christ does not know them though they call Him "Lord, Lord". But they are workers of lawlessness; i.e., they work their own will. Judas is the great and terrible example of a person like this. No one suspected him right up to the last; except that our Lord, of course, knew his true character all along (John 6:64-71). He was chosen to be one of the 12 to serve afterward as an example of how far false profession can deceive others.

2 Corinthians 13:5

But does not 2 Cor. 13:5 tell us to examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith?

SINCE YE SEEK A PROOF OF CHRIST SPEAKING IN ME, (who is not weak towards you, but is powerful among you, for if indeed he has been crucified in weakness, yet he lives by God's power; for indeed we are weak in him, but we shall Live with him by God's power towards you,) EXAMINE YOUR OWN SELVES IF YE BE IN THE FAITH; prove your own selves: do ye not recognize yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you, unless indeed ye be reprobates?

I have changed the type style so that you can see at a glance how you have been misled into thinking this Scripture supports the 'lost again' notion. The fleshly Corinthians were foolishly raising questions about Paul's apostleship. Do you want the evidence of Christ speaking in me?, he wrote. Since I came to Corinth and preached Christ to you, see if you are Christians and that will be proof enough, unless you are reprobates. A reprobate is a person rejected by God. Those people noticed in Matthew 7:21-23 will find their ultimate portion with the reprobates, i.e., the rejected. The Corinthian Christians were not, of course, reprobates. Nor is the passage discussing being saved or lost; the subject is their foolish questioning of Paul's apostleship and that their being saved was proof of Christ speaking in the Apostle. You will note that part of verse 3 and all of verse 4 is parenthetical (a parenthesis). This makes it clearer.

Hebrews 6:4-7.

But does not Hebrews 6 show the possibility of a Christian becoming Lost again? I will quote it from the KJV so it has the best appearance in favor of your notion.

FOR IT IS IMPOSSIBLE for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, IF THEY SHALL FALL AWAY, TO RENEW THEM AGAIN UNTO REPENTANCE....

I have changed the type style so that you may see the consequence of your doctrine more readily. If this is speaking of being lost again after having been saved, note well those words: FOR IT IS IMPOSSIBLE... IF THEY FALL AWAY, TO RENEW THEM AGAIN TO REPENTANCE. It would mean that one cannot be saved again. With such consequence of your doctrine, perhaps you would be willing to see that this passage concerns apostates. An apostate never was saved. Apostasy is looked at here as apostasy from the Spirit's presence and action among the people of God, whereas in Ch. 10 it is looked at as apostasy from the blood. No true Christian apostatizes. He is "kept guarded by (the) power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in (the) Last time" (1 Peter 1:5), and God gave that faith in the first place (Eph. 2:8).

Hebrews 3:6.

But does not Hebrews 3:6 say we may not hold fast to the end?

...but Christ, as Son over his house, whose house are we, if indeed we hold fast the boldness and the boast of hope firm to the end (Hebrews 3:6). For we are become companions of the Christ if indeed we hold the beginning of the assurance firm to the end. (Hebrews 3:14).

These “ifs” are meant to test false profession. “See brethren, lest there be in any one of you a wicked heart of unbelief, in turning away from (the) living God” (Hebrews 3:12). That is what apostasy in Hebrews 6 and 10 is about also. A real Christian does not have a wicked heart of unbelief. Those that apostatize do have a wicked heart of unbelief.

We are companions of Christ if we you a say, as my suppose that three years from now you ‘let go’ and do not hold fast. Read Heb. 3:6,14 carefully. This tells you that if you ‘let go’ in the future, then you are not a companion of Christ right now. You can only be so right now if you hold fast to the end. You can only be saved now if you never ‘let go’ in the future. These passages expressly state that your present connection with Christ depends on what you do in the future. Thus, if you ‘let go’ three years from now you are not Christ’s right now.

You have been wrongly taught the bearing of these passages. In fact, they teach eternal security, while warning those who have a wicked heart of unbelief and make a profession. These passages show that if I am Christ’s right now, I will hold fast to the end—but, of course, not by human strength. We are in the hand of the Son and the Father (John 10:28,29). In fact, in divine purpose the saved are glorified already. Romans 8:30 tells us so. We are kept by the power of God (1 Peter 1:5).

1 Corinthians 9:27

But surely 1 Corinthians 9:27 teaches that a man might be lost again?

Know ye not that they who run in (the) race-course run all, but one receives the prize? Thus run in order that ye may obtain. But every one that contends (for a prize) is temperate in all things: they then indeed that they may receive a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. I therefore thus run, as not uncertainly; so I combat, as not beating the air. But I buffet my body, and lead it captive, lest (after) having preached to others I should be myself rejected.

The essential message of the passage is that holy living must go with a profession of Christianity and that even Paul was no exception to this. A man might be a preacher and be a castaway, i.e. rejected. Judas was such a person.

“Castaway”, or rejected, in Greek is the same word translated reprobate (Romans 1:28; 2 Corinthians 13:5,6,7; 2 Timothy 3:8; Titus 1:16) and rejected (Hebrews 6:8). It comes from a root meaning a counterfeit. A counterfeit does not become one. It always was one. Such was Judas. And such are some modern preachers and their pupils. Even “miracle” workers are castaways (Matthew 7:21-23). They are like the man in Matthew 22:11-14 who had no wedding garment; or like the evil servant in Matthew 24:48. Foolish virgins are they, having no oil (Matthew 25:3).

It is said that even Paul was uncertain. False. In this very passage he said, “I therefore thus run, as not uncertainly...” (1 Corinthians 9:26). But he states that even so, holy living goes with salvation and he, Paul, is no exception.

The Parables

There are a number of parables that differentiate between the true and the false. The wheat in the parable of the wheat and the tares (darnel) in Matt. 13 represents believers while the tares are the children of the wicked one (Matt. 13:38). The tares never were wheat.

The man without a wedding garment (Matt. 22:11-14) never was saved. He was never chosen unto salvation. The fact is that he came in without a wedding garment.

The servant of Matt. 24:48 was an evil man whose portion was appointed with the hypocrites, since that is what he was. A hypocrite is a false professor like those noted in Matt. 7:21-23.

The same is true of the five foolish virgins. “Virgins” is a term indicating their profession just as in the case of the wise.

All professed Christ is Lord. The great distinguishing fact is that the foolish “did not take oil with them.” They never had oil. They never were saved. They were not ready, nor ever were ready, for the Lord’s coming. They may have lighted their wicks (torches) but they were not fed with oil. It was profession only, not divine testimony; and so they were shut out.

The same end awaited the man who received one talent (Matt. 25:14-30). He was a servant, but in profession only, like those in Matt. 7:21-23. He also called Christ “Lord”. But the secret of the heart will come out and it did so when he referred to his Lord as a “hard man” (v.24). His talent represents a responsibility in connection with his profession of owning Christ as Lord, but as you can see nothing resulted from it when all was said and done. He was an unprofitable servant like those in Matt. 7:21-23 and like Judas, and his proper portion is in the outer darkness. Christendom has many such people in it. Their profession but makes them all the more responsible before God and they will be judged accordingly. Meanwhile, praise God, His saints are kept by His power unto salvation ready to be revealed!

Free to Sin?

Well, you may say, I admit that these considerations seem to point to eternal security, but if people believe that, they will be free to sin. Friend, someone who claims to love the Lord Jesus, and claims to be free to sin is like those people in Matthew 7:21-23 saying “Lord, Lord”. They are not real. Your notion that fear of being Lost again is a good motive to live a holy life is unscriptural and not borne out by the facts. Titus 2:11-12 says:

For the grace of God which carries with it salvation for all men has appeared, teaching us that, having denied impiety and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and justly, and piously in the present course of things.

You see from this that it is grace (not fear) that teaches us. In Romans 6, Paul has directly dealt a blow expressly against your notion. "What then shall we say? Should we continue in sin that grace may abound?" (Romans 6:1); i.e., being eternally secure, may we go on sinning and all the more grace will abound to get us through? Not so, says the apostle; and Romans 6 shows the falsity of this notion. Friend, do you know where the thought came from that would seek to take advantage of God's grace? It arose in you from the carnal mind (Romans 8:7). Persons that would take advantage of God's grace are noticed in Jude: they turn the grace of God into Lasciviousness (Jude 1:4). They "crept in" to the Christian profession. They do not "walk in the light". They are typified by creeping things which are an abomination unto the Lord (Leviticus 11:41). Jude shows the judgment of such. No, friend, grace teaches us to turn from ungodliness and worldly lusts to live soberly, righteously and godly. If you think otherwise, you are grievously out of step with God and His Word.

This paper is meant to be limited in size and eternal security is a large subject. I cannot go over all the Scriptures used to oppose the truth of eternal security, but I pray the Lord that these considerations will cause you to Look more deeply into the grace of God. It is by God's grace that a Christian is saved (Ephesians 2:8) and justified (Romans 3:24) and then taught how to turn from ungodliness to holy living (Titus 2:11,12).

Denial of Eternal Security Usually Leads to Dividing & Defiling the Person of Christ.

Error concerning the fact that the seed of God [1 John 3:9), i.e., the new nature, within us cannot sin [1 John 3:9), is connected with dividing and defiling the Person of Christ, Who could not sin.

1. It is said that while Christ could not have sinned as God, yet He could have sinned as man. In effect, such a doctrine divides the Person of Christ, for had He sinned His humanity would have to go to hell and thus the Person of Christ would be split. That would be a denial of the fundamental truth of the union of the human and divine nature, indissolubly, in one Person. The other alternative would be that the God-man would go to hell. Neither alternative is the truth, neither is possible, and the assertion of either alternative is fundamentally evil doctrine.
2. When our Lord emptied Himself (Phil. 2:7), He veiled Godhead glory in flesh. As man on earth it could be said of Him that all the fullness of the Godhead dwelled in Him bodily (Col. 2:9). The evil doctrine that our Lord could have sinned also means that He in Whom all the fullness dwelled could have gone to hell. Such teaching does not come from the Scripture of Truth or from the Spirit of Truth.
3. The temptations of our Lord were for the purpose of putting the pure gold, so to speak, to the acid test; not to show that it was not gold, but to demonstrate that it was. The evil doctrine suggests that "that holy thing" (Luke 1:35) had within Himself a tug to have fellowship with the evil suggestions from Satan. In reality, such a tug is evil in itself and thus is the Holy One Who knew no sin (2 Cor. 5:21) defiled.

The blasphemy proceeds and claims that the infirmities of Heb.4:15 are our sinful tendencies and Christ sympathizes with us in this. How defiling of His Person it is to say He sympathizes with our sinful tendencies because He felt the same. Paul said that he gloried in his infirmities (2 Cor. 12:9), and it is rather obvious that he did not glory in sinful tendencies. Compare 1 Tim. 5:23, etc. Infirmities are weaknesses.

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If we would believe God's Word we would be delivered from these doctrines; and then, overcome by the magnitude of His grace, we would want to be here for His pleasure, as the Lord Jesus was here for God's pleasure; and present our bodies to Him as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1), being taught by grace to turn from the wrong and learn what pleases Him.

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