

LESSON ELEVEN

ETERNAL SECURITY

A. THE DEFINITION OF ETERNAL SECURITY.

By "Eternal Security" is meant the belief that once a man is saved he can never be lost. It is sometimes stated as: "Once a son, always a son." In spite of the fact that this has been a great source of controversy down through the years in the professing church, the Bible is very clear on this matter, and we need not be in doubt just what the Scriptural teaching is concerning the security of our salvation. It is necessary to make a difference between UNCONDITIONAL Eternal Security and CONDITIONAL Eternal Security. Also it is necessary to understand the Bible teaching on PREDESTINATION AND ELECTION. Once we get these subjects clear in our minds the matter of Eternal Security offers no problem.

B. FOREKNOWLEDGE AND FOREORDINATION.

Since God is the omniscient One and the Great I Am dwelling in eternity, He sees from the beginning every action and event. Nothing takes Him by surprise. He foreknows everything. However, this does not take the responsibility of action away from man; the responsibility of decision is still his. Man is still a free moral agent although God foreknows man's decisions and actions before they take place. The foreordination of God is limited to God's foreknowledge. In other words, He foreordains what He foreknows. This explains clearly the Scripture: "*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate...*" (Romans 8:29-30).

C. ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION

Scriptural References:

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (I Peter 1:2).

"According as he hath chosen us in him...Having predestined us unto the adoption of children..." (Ephesians 1:4-5).

"Election" means to be "chosen." When the Bible speaks about being elected it means being chosen by God. The individual members of the church are elected or chosen by God but this is according to God's foreknowledge, which in turn foresees each man's own voluntary decision and action. Accordingly, the responsibility of God's election is placed directly upon the individual's own decision.

Whereas the individual members of the church are elected, the church or body is predestined. God's purpose will be fulfilled in having a people to bear His Name. There will be a church awaiting her Lord when Jesus returns in spite of all the powers of hell. (Matthew 16:18).

D. SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

God is sovereign. No force or power can hinder God's will from being fulfilled. However, it has been His own sovereign act to limit Himself to the free will moral agency of man. It is

God's desire that His creatures should worship him of their own volition. God is seeking fellowship and communion with man. Therefore God has permitted His sovereignty to interfere with man's free choice and power of decision.

E. CALVINISM.

The doctrine of Calvinism comes from the reformer John Calvin, who first taught it. It is from this teaching that we have the thought of the "Unconditional Eternal Security" of the believer, or "once in grace always in grace," or "once a son always a son."

The doctrine of Calvinism may be summed up as follows:

1. Salvation is entirely of God;
2. God has predestined certain individuals to salvation;
3. Christ died for the "elect;"
4. The child of God is kept by God's grace, which is irresistible and he can never be lost;
5. Once a son always a son.

Some of the Scriptures used to attempt to prove Calvinism are John 10:28; John 17:6; Romans 8:35; Romans 11:29; I Corinthians 3:10; II Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 1:6; and I Peter 1:5.

F. WHY UNCONDITIONAL ETERNAL SECURITY IS ERROR.

1. This teaching is the first lie. This is exactly what Satan told Eve. *"...Ye shall not surely die"* (Genesis 3:4).
2. It would make God a respecter of persons. However, the Bible states that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34).
3. It would make God a liar. The gospel would not be for the "WHOSOEVER" as Jesus said (John 3:16), but rather for a select few.
4. It would not be God's will to preach to every creature in spite of the fact that He commands us to do this. (Mark 16:15).
5. If man is not a free will moral agent, then it makes God responsible for sin. This is impossible.
6. It would make of God a cruel unreasonable tyrant condemning millions of innocent victims to a devil's hell without a chance or choice.
7. It would make God to be inconsistent, condemning sin in the life of the unbeliever but condoning sin in the life of the believer.
8. Eternal life is in Jesus Christ alone. If Jesus is abiding in the heart, eternal life is there also. However, if He withdraws from an unclean vessel, eternal life is gone also.
9. Sonship, when related to salvation is a legal term of being adopted. Christ is the "only begotten" of the Father. Accordingly the term, "once a son always a son" does not apply here.
10. Finally, the testimony of the Scriptures is overwhelmingly against this doctrine.

G. ARMINIANISM.

This doctrine was first taught by Jacob Hermann, Dutch theologian, in Arminius. The teaching may be summed up as follows:

1. God's will is that all men be saved because Christ died for all;
2. God offers His grace to all, which can be resisted to eternal loss;
3. God elects on the basis of foreseen faith or unbelief;
4. It is possible for a truly regenerated person to be lost if he turns back into a life of disobedience and sin.

Some of the Scriptures used to prove Arminianism are I Timothy 2:4-6; Hebrews 2:9; John 6:40; II Corinthians 5:14; Titus 2:11-12; II Peter 1:10; Hebrews 10:26-30; Hebrews 6:4-6; and II Peter 2:21.

H. THE SCRIPTURAL TRUTH.

The Arminian viewpoint is the Scriptural truth providing we do not lean to extreme legalism. A backslider is a lost soul. We must walk with God if we are to be saved. At the same time we must see the grace of God as sufficient to keep the soul.

A traveler buys a ticket and boards a train. He takes a seat and trusts the conductor and engineer to see that the train takes him to his destination. The train will do this providing he remains aboard. His responsibility is to stay aboard the train. If he gets off, the train will not take him to his destination. So it is with our salvation.

LESSON ELEVEN

SELF HELP TEST

A. Define the following clearly:

1. Calvinism -

2. Arminianism -

B. Give FIVE reasons why the teaching "once in grace always in grace" is wrong:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

C. Explain why God has limited his own SOVEREIGNTY to the FREE WILL AGENCY of man.