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**How Does the Doctrine of Eternal Security Affect Our
Pastoral Theology and Missiology**

Dr. Lizette F. Knight

Dean, Asian Baptist Graduate Theological Seminary

Professor of Christian Education

Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary, Philippines¹

Introduction

This paper covers my personal testimony on how the doctrine of eternal security affects my pastoral theology and missiology. An e-interview on this question was conducted and the results were presented in a table based on the responses of the faculty and students of Philippine Baptist theological Seminary and Asia Baptist Graduate Theological Seminary. An integrated effect of the doctrine of eternal salvation was written in an easy-to-read format using principles through an A-Z outline. The paper was concluded with the challenge to persevere in the belief on eternal security.

Personal Testimony

The fear of death and boredom of life were the impetus of my salvation. I was raised in a religion whose theology and teaching was that good works were the way to heaven – knowing that and knowing who I was became enough assurance that I was headed to hell. Life

¹ See www.ABGTS.net and www.PBTS.net.ph, respectively.

seemed meaningless and so frightened about my destiny when I die. Thanks be to God, Jesus saved me. While writing this introduction my heart was overflowing with gratitude, as I reflected on God's timing in saving me.

When I accepted Christ as Savior and Lord I was so excited about my assurance of salvation that on that same day I shared the gospel to a group of students in the university in which I was enrolled. The truth of eternal salvation was so real that it drove me to be involved in aggressive evangelism. The reality of the freedom and salvation was so wonderful that I found myself enjoying my salvation. But in contrast to joy were tears after tears because I imagined my parents, bother and sisters and relatives who do not have the personal relationship with God were all headed to hell.

The gospel was shared with me in my second year in college. Campus Crusade for Christ evangelized, disciplined and equipped me in areas of evangelism and discipleship. University Baptist Church was used by God in the implementations of my campus training. I was taught in the truth that not only do I have eternal life, but God choose me to be His servant. These doctrines were used by God to nurture me towards Christ-likeness. Grateful for His grace, I responded to His call to fulltime ministry while in college. Added to gratefulness was the overflowing fulfillment when people responded positively to the gospel as I shared.

While researching for this topic, I desire to be objective. Thus, on top of the benefits of the security of the believers, I also have to look at the other side of the fence. I was shocked at the words of those who are opponents to the security of the believer, a sample is quoted below:

Because of the teaching of eternal security wickedness has flourished throughout the so-called "Christian" church on a global scale. There is no way for any man to calculate the broken homes through divorce, suicides and criminal acts that have been committed because people have been deceived into thinking their salvation is secure regardless what they do or fail to do.²

I was literally cried while writing this section. In a moment of mental disequilibrium, looking back, the teaching that advocated the

² Dan Corner, "Nine Reasons Why I Hate: The Teaching of Eternal Security." Available at www.evangelicaloutreach.org/9reasons.html (Accessed June 6, 2011).

opposite of my beliefs made me think. But I did not want to go back to my first 18 years of life where life that had so much uncertainty and death. Because of the belief in my heart then, that I was going to hell, and because sin was always present – “so many small lies,” I said. I had hatred in my heart, bad thoughts towards others, and pride because of achievements. Inner sins kept me from writing publicly.

Thank God I am forgiven. Thank God I can move on and be a repentant sinner as I agree with God that even if my intimate fellowship may be destroyed, my relationship with Him is intact, because I am His child.

The exciting and productive years in the ministry made life very fulfilling and fruitful. Even during the trying times when pain was present, God gave me relief and release from constant fears and worries, and I experienced that my triumph in Christ was more than enough. Those exciting moments when God answered prayers and opened up doors of services for Him, I will not exchange for anything. I am serving because it makes me glad. It is a wonderful feeling to be saved, and that is coupled with the joy of witnessing and seeing people drawn to His kingdom and assured of their eternal destiny.

Collective Results of E-Interview

This article is partly qualitative in nature. The result of this study was from the on -line interview of colleagues and students of Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary (PBTS) and Asia Baptist Graduate Theological Seminary (ABGTS) on the question: “How does the doctrine of eternal security affect our pastoral theology/missiology? The researcher e-mailed seventy two professors and students of ABGTS and PBTS last February 1, 2011, and a follow-up e-mail was sent last May 28, 2011. The e-mails keep coming until June 22, 2011. The total respondents were eighteen. All of them agreed on the doctrine of eternal security except for one. This comprised twenty five percent returns. The tabulation below shows the result of the repeated themes of the respondents.

Table 1 Respondents Repeated Theme

Variable	Frequency	Rank
Guarantees permanence of salvation	11	1
Challenges ministerial leader’s perspective: Zealousness in the ministry	10	2
Challenges ministerial leader’s perspective: Complacency in wrong perspective	7	3
Confirms benefits of salvation	7	3
Inspires personal evangelism and missions	6	4
Brings personal joy in salvation	5	5
Affirms the sovereignty and sufficiency of God in saving humankind	5	5
Supports church growth	4	6
Nurtures faith as a lifelong process	2	7

The table above shows the frequency and rank of the repetitive theme from the population. The first in the rank was the variable “Guarantees permanence of salvation.” This means that the respondents believed in the permanence of their salvation and the salvation of the people they ministered to.

Second in the rank was the variable “Challenges ministerial leader’s perspective in their developed zealousness in the ministry.” Based on the interview; the respondents’ assurance of their salvation resulted in their zealousness in the ministry.

Third in the rank was the variable “Challenges ministerial leader’s perspective: Complacency in wrong perspective,” and the variable “Confirms benefits of salvation”. Interestingly, the respondents warn those who were lax in sin and lifestyle. The variable “Confirms benefits of salvation” included benefits such as destiny, immunity, life after death, sense of belonging, hope, certainty and sanctification.

“Inspires personal evangelism and missions” was the fourth variable in the rank. While the fifth variables in the rank were “brings personal joy in salvation,” and “affirms the sovereignty and sufficiency of God in saving humankind.” These repeated themes were related to each other. As one was inspired in evangelism and mission, joy in their salvation was evident. Hence there was the affirmation of the sovereignty and sufficiency of God in saving humankind as they did evangelism and mission.

The Variable “Supports church growth” was sixth in the rank. This supported the above mentioned variables. When one was inspired in mission and evangelism, so does church growth. The last variable in the rank was “Nurtures faith as a lifelong process.” One of the respondents of this theme did not believe in the security of the believers that is why he/she should nurture faith as a lifelong process. A challenging principle each one needs to observe especially one who believed the eternal security of the believer – through God’s power.

A to Z Effects of the Doctrine of Eternal Security

The integration of the interviews and literary research on how the doctrine of eternal security affects our pastoral theology/missiology are presented below:

Aggressive evangelism. Through the ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ, I learned aggressive evangelism. Right after conversion, you can say I was on fire for the Lord and I shared my faith aggressively. To this day, after long years of doing ministry I always have that urgent desire to share the gospel to people of all ages. One repeated result of the e-interview is that aggressive evangelism is still a driving force to share the gospel to others. Rey Navarro of International Baptist Church Singapore said,

Because I am secured, I want others to have the same assurance, and therefore, the doctrine of eternal security is a kind of drive for me to share the Gospel of meet each other face to face. There’s no meeting of this kind if there is no eternal security. Eternal security added great value to one’s soul. Because I can somehow secure the soul of a person, which is priceless, I am willing to pay a high price for it. I am willing to give for missions. I am willing to sell my property for the sake of the lost soul. I am willing to really labour for one single soul.³

Further, Bawuni and Coloma declared:

The understanding gives assurance of salvation to each one who believes. Having doubt in this teaching or belief, our evangelism will neither be active nor alive.⁴

The Doctrine of Eternal Security encourages the ministers and missionaries to reach out to the lost world. It motivates them to

³ Rey Navarro, e-mail message to Lizette Knight, February 1, 2011.

⁴ Zhopo Rhak Ho Bawumi, email message to Lizette Knight, April 26, 2011

evangelize. Like farmers, they will not plant seeds that will not grow and eventually will be harvested. Their business is not just to comfort people in times of their miseries and troubles, but to challenge them to repent of their sins and receive God’s free gift of salvation in Christ. Their passion is to proclaim the Gospel to the lost world since the death of Christ is efficacious to all who receive him.⁵

Blessed Ministry. In 2Tim 1:12 it says “For which cause 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 that which I have committed unto him against that day.” The Manubags wrote, “Yes, we have a God in whom we can trust and whatever promise(s) He made, He will bring them to pass. As we share the Gospel, we can tell people about this God who keeps His promises.”⁶

The Doctrine of Eternal Security is dearly held among Baptists and those who adhere to the Reformed Faith. This is a Biblical truth that assures eternal reward for the ministry. The pastors and missionaries are usually denied of handsome material benefits as rewards for their dedication and hard work in the ministry. This doctrine guarantees that their labor in the Lord will not be in vain.⁷

This doctrine also supports our hope. Psalm 37:28 says, “For the LORD loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. God will preserve us forever... what a blessed hope! Even if we suffer here on earth while serving the Master, these sufferings are incomparable to what awaits us in heaven! Praise the Lord! Hallelujah! Amen!”⁸

Confidence in the Ministry. In order to preach or teach on eternal security, he or she may not be able to explain fully but should be experienced in the relationship with Jesus Christ. What I do not have I cannot give, similarly to share His salvation, a person should experience the joy of salvation and only then the hearers will come to know more about the eternal security.⁹

⁵ Rolando R. Coloma, email message to Lizette knight, April 11, 2011

⁶ Ricardo and Edna Manubag, email message to Lizette Knight, February 5, 2011

⁷ Rolando R. Coloma.

⁸ Ricardo and Edna Manubag.

⁹ Zhopo Rhakho Bawumi.

Hebrews 10:14 says, “For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.” The salvation that we received from what Christ did on the cross of Calvary is forever and therefore eternal. It is not easy to convince people about these spiritual things but our motivation and desire to obey God keep us going and doing His will.

The doctrine of the eternal security of the believer helps the pastor ease the minds of the members of his church who are troubled by and, therefore, unable to make much progress in their spiritual lives because of sins committed after conversion. By assuring them of the permanence of their salvation, members of the church are able to move on with their lives and to focus on their ministries in the church. They can rest secure in the assurance that nothing indeed can separate them from the love of God. “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. 8:38-39). The pastor is, thus, able to minister better to the members of his church.¹⁰

Desire to be like Christ. Eternal salvation encourages the believer to be like Christ. “The Gospel encourages hope, but it also promotes holiness; it imparts peace, but it also inculcates godly piety; it cherishes confidence, yet not by looking back to conversion but forward to the desired haven. It justifies the expectation of preservation, but only as we persevere in the path of duty.”¹¹

The truth of Eternal Security establishes the pastoral and mission work. It becomes clear that spirituality is not a mere religiosity where people naively believe that salvation is based on their own merit; they can have it and even lose it by their own free will. The minister challenges the believers to show through their testimony that they are indeed saved. He admonishes them to persevere in facing tribulations and adversities in life, while holding on to God’s eternal promise of redemption.¹²

¹⁰ Waldo Raposa, email message to Lizette Knight, May 28, 2011.

¹¹ Rolando R. Coloma.

¹² Ibid.

Eternal security affirms the sovereignty and sufficiency of God's power and grace in salvation. It provides ground for the pursuit of holiness or sanctification. And it inspires evangelism and missions.

Eternal security affirms a God-exalting soteriology. The doctrine magnifies God as the One who has sufficient power and grace to save His people and keep them saved. Jude 1:24-25: "Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, 25 to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen." Salvation is from the beginning, middle and end, the work of God, therefore "no one may boast" (Ephesians 2:9).

If salvation can be lost, then it is not fully of grace, and ultimately it depends on human ability to preserve it. If this is so, then we can no longer say, "sola Deo gloria" in salvation.¹³

Exciting Life – Interestingly one answer of the above question was related to looks and outlooks. On how the countenance of one who has the assurance of eternal life can affect one's ministry but also one's look which is a reflection of the inner peace and joy in one's life. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full (John 10:10).

Doctrine of Eternal Security brings joy and sense of security. For if there is no assurance of salvation the tendency is to live in fear and insecurity. One has to always exert extra effort to preserve his salvation. There is no sense of completeness because one's salvation might be undone by one single sin. There is always fear of being disqualified. It robs our joy in serving God. Indeed, the labor of the one who adheres to this Biblical truth is driven by his secured relationship with God.¹⁴

If one is happy, those around that person will be in a happy mood also. Likewise, if one is edgy the others will also be edgy; it will be stressful to be around those kinds of persons. In this premise, I can argue that having contentment, and security in life, much more in the life hereafter, would create a positive impact on others. More than the words that I can speak are actions that can be seen in me. This

¹³ Gerry Molato, emailed to Lizette Knight, February 10, 2011

¹⁴ Rolando R. Coloma

would enable me to carry the gospel that I am sharing. Life itself will be enough witness for Jesus. Definitely, knowledge of my own personal eternal security affects the way I do missions!¹⁵

One of the leading growing religions in the world takes pride because they teach that members would need to be faithful to stay saved. Another religion espouses the same teaching as well. At least on the emphasis of doing good works. No one wants to be excommunicated because it is a ticket to hell.

In some evangelical churches, Christians are motivated to be zealous because they believe one needs to maintain his relationship with the Lord. Evangelism would be one of the indicators of a good relationship with the Lord. So how does eternal security affect our missiology and Pastoral Care? Well it may actually contribute to the complacency of some. However, I would still hold on to it simply because I believe it is what the bible teaches. When we allow freedom to work in the lives of believers, which is where one could actually see the motivation behind a believer's good work. Is he doing it out of love for the Lord or out of fear?¹⁶

In contrast, a believer assured of his salvation is joyful, because he is aware that God saved and loved him even if he did not deserve it – a reflection of a just yet loving God. I as a teacher will be confident when teaching the doctrine of salvation and practically all the other doctrines as well, because no one can take me out of God's hand and He is faithful to fulfill all His promises.¹⁷

Forgiven from past, present and future sins. God forgave and still will forgive not some but all sins. Scripture passages that teach strongly on this are the following:

Eph 1:7: In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace. As God forgives, so shall the redeemed.

Eph 4:32: Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Col 1:14: In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Col 3:13: Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

¹⁵ Felicitas Panizales, emailed to Lizette Knight, February 7, 2011.

¹⁶ Dennis Asuncion, emailed to Lizette Knight, April 8, 2011

¹⁷ Maria Rosalynn L. Asuncion, emailed to Lizette Knight June 22, 2011

Even when we sin, the Holy Spirit is available to convict us and complete us once again. Dr. Ironside articulated this well:

Glorified And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. (Romans 8:20)

When people come to know Christ as their Savior, they are brought into a relationship with God that guarantees their eternal security. Jude 24 declares, "To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy." God's power is able to keep the believer from falling. It is up to Him, not us, to present us before His glorious presence. Our eternal security is a result of God keeping us, not us maintaining our own salvation.

Hope for the future. Life here on earth may be uncertain but the hope in the future is certain. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3)

"That is eternal security - to be with God forever in heaven. Of course, we don't want others to miss this opportunity that is why rain or shine, we go to the field and share the Gospel of Christ!"¹⁸

So even when we suffer temporarily, our future is secured. As "This Biblical belief brings comfort to God's people. They are holding on to their faith and learning to understand that the assurance of their salvation affirms God's providence and provision in their temporal life for the He who began a good work in them is able to bring it to completion until the return of Jesus Christ."¹⁹

Increase of church members. This effect is articulated by Hyosuhn Ahn, a professor and at the same time a pastor of a church. He said.

The assurance of salvation has been the foundation of my ministry as I served as a pastor. Our church members already had an assurance of their salvation. However, when there was an emphasis on this issue, I observed that they

¹⁸ Ricardo and Edna Manubag

¹⁹ Rolando R. Coloma

brought friends and relatives around them so that they will join God's community. As a result, there has been a sign of consistent growth. The new members showed changes in their facial expression as they had assurance of salvation, and expressed their hunger for the word of God. They again bring their friends and relatives to the church. It seems to me that what happened to Samaritan woman is happening in our church(cf. John 4:39-42). So, I would say that the assurance of salvation has been the foundation of church growth.²⁰

Joy of Salvation. Everywhere around us are miseries and disasters: These can be personally and corporately, as a nation and around the world. However, salvation is at hand and one who receives salvation also gets to experience the joy of salvation.

Psalm 9:14: That I may declare your praises in the gates of Daughter Zion, and there rejoice in your salvation.

Psalm 51:12: Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me

John 15:11: I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Romans 15:13: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jude 1:24-25: To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

Kinship as sons and daughters of God. The moment of our regeneration is also time for us becoming a son / daughter of God. “Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. “ (John 1:12). He is our Father, “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” (II Cor. 6:18)

Eternal security confirms our sense of belonging. We belong to Christ forever. And we can encourage others to believe and be part of the family of God as well. This is indeed a wonderful motivation for us and for other people!²¹

Laxity in one's lifestyle or sin – this is a good warning from the respondents. Just because of God's grace and the assurance of heaven,

²⁰ Hyosuhn Ahn, email message to Lizette Knight, June 17, 2011

²¹ Ricardo and Edna Manubag.

one can take for granted the grace showered in the life of a believer. Two respondents warn:

As ministers, tend to see God's grace operating in the lives of believers in Christ even in the midst of their wayward living or period of spiritual dryness. As believers this doctrine allows us some leeway to live our lives with complacency and lack of initiative to live holy lives. Unlike those who believe that their salvation can be lost when one sins deliberately against God. For them, they tend to live life more carefully and they follow a more disciplined life in constant obedience to God.²²

The Doctrine of Eternal Security affects my pastoral theology and missiology by inspiring me to regard faith as a life-long process. It does this because I do not believe in Eternal Security. I do not believe in Eternal Security based on at least three passages of Scripture- Matthew 7:21-23, Matthew 24:13, and Matthew 25:31-46. I interpret these words of Jesus to mean that not everyone who confesses Jesus with his or her mouth will ultimately be allowed to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. As a result, my pastoral theology and missiology will seek to nurture long-lasting faith and not short-term faith. For me, as a minister, long-lasting faith means empowering and equipping the believer to write his or her own life-long individual faith story. A believer who is empowered and equipped can think creatively and critically for him or herself about matters of faith.²³

Mission Inspiration – Gerry Molato describes this section profoundly. He said:

Eternal security inspires evangelism and missions. The doctrine that says salvation can be lost is less glorious and inspiring than the doctrine that assures people of God's power to save to the uttermost (Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. Hebrews 7:25). To know that God is not only able to save but also preserve believers is a blessed source of joy and encouragement to the missionary. For that it would mean his or her labor will not be in vain. Though I must quickly add, that I hold to the doctrine of eternal security not just because it is inspiring, but because I believe it is biblical.²⁴

No condemnation – one may sin and sometimes or many times sin and sin again.

²² Nori Dela Paz - Lacquian, email message to Lizette Knight, May 27, 2011.

²³ Neil Boggan, email message to Lizette Knight, February 22, 2011.

²⁴ Gerry Molato

However, the doctrine teaches us that once saved, saved for ever. So even if we have committed great sins—still there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ. This verse heightens our certainty. Romans 8:1 says, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” We will not face condemnation anymore. “Not guilty! The lives we are living now are free from judgment. Jesus has declared us not guilty and has offered us freedom from sin and power to do His will. As we serve the Lord we are doing His will with freedom and with His empowerment.²⁵ The apostle John said “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:18). Amen to that! ²⁶

Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Rom 8:34

Objects of His Intercession. Times that we need help; the Savior who saved us is also interceding for us. What a comfort! Heb 7:25 says, “Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them”. Further, what a joy that no one can condemn us but instead intercede for us. Rom 8:34 Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands that were only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God’s presence (Heb 9:24),

Perseveration of God’s People – God who saved enables the saints to persevere to the truth of eternal security. . He is able as Romans 16:25. Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, God who is faith will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability. 1 Corinthians 10:13. No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be

²⁵ Ricardo and Edna Manubag

²⁶ Ibid.

tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. Other verses that support the theology of the perseverance of God's people are shown below:²⁷

Ephesians 5:25: Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Philippians 1:6: Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Note that a Christian's confidence resides not in himself but in God. The work of grace that God has begun in Christians will be brought to completion. What God starts He completes. God can guarantee a believer's preservation: "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13).

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24: Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

2 Thessalonians 3:3: But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.

2 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.

Jude 1: To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ.

Jude 24: Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

Qualified members of God's family through adoption. Before we receive Christ as savior and Lord, we once children of the devil but we become children of God after our conversion. (John 1:12). Thus He becomes our Father and other believers as brother and sisters. This happened when we were adopted into the family of God. As defined, "Adoption is not the same as regeneration. Regeneration

²⁷ Brian Schwertley, An Examination of the Five Points of Calvinism – Part V: Perseverance of the Saints. Available at www.graceonlinelibrary.org/...theology/.../an-examination-of-the-five-points-of-calvinism-part-v-perseverance-of-the-saints-by-brian-schwe Accessed June 1, 2011.

affects our nature; adoption affects our relationship. Regeneration precedes faith, which precedes adoption. But it happens in a moment, with no interval or exception. So, we are doubly God's children.”²⁸

As brothers and sisters here on earth, the need to be responsible in our relationship is vital. Clark said,

While the doctrine of the security of the believer is helpful in many ways, it offers a challenge to those doing pastoral care. It times, we take this doctrine for granted and in our arrogance, we ignore our responsibilities in our relationships here on earth. For example, because we feel forgiven and “secure” with God we may neglect reconciliation with members of our family. Security of the believer can, when taken to the extreme, perpetuate a kind of denial that keeps us from dealing with our problems in the here and now. When this happens, we become contributors to the suffering of those around us instead of being bearers of the light.²⁹

Reconciled and declared Righteous. Being reconciled to God – from sinfulness to sainthood, from being unrighteous to being righteous – not on our own but what Christ did for us at Calvary: “and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus” (Rom 3:24). Further, we have peace with God, justified, sanctified, glorified and become heirs. The verses below support who we are in Christ.

Rom 5:1: Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom 5:9: Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!

Rom 8:30: And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

I Cor 6:11: And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Titus 3:7: So that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Sealed and Indwelt by the Spirit. We were sealed by the Holy Spirit: “Set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come” (II Cor 1:22). He

²⁸ The *Benefits of Salvation*. Basic Christian Doctrines 35. Available at www.faithbibleonline.net/BasicChristian_Doctrine/35.htm, accessed on June 6, 2011

²⁹ Ryan Clark, email message to Lizette Knight, May 28, 2011

indwells in us when we accepted Christ as Lord and Savior. So, do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Instead be filled with the Holy Spirit and walk in His power and grace.

He enters our whole being, even our body. It is the heavenly counterpart to being demon-possessed. He fills us. Romans 8 is the great chapter on the indwelling of the Spirit. Also, this is the miracle of the baptism of the Spirit, misunderstood by Pentecostals. The Spirit comes into us, with the result that He is in us. At the same moment, he puts us into Himself, with the result that we are in the Spirit. He in us, we are in Him. It is not a second experience, but part of salvation.³⁰

The ministry on the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer starts at the moment of his conversion. When a believer recognizes that the Holy Spirit now lives in him, he has to make that choice of daily walking in the power of the Holy Spirit. Rom 5:5 “And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”

Transferred into God’s Kingdom. Col 1:13b: “For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.”

We Are Transferred From Satan's Kingdom. “Col. 1:13 says that God transferred us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. Christ, not Satan, is now our King. We defected from Satan's evil empire, became traitors to his wicked regime, and now are God's spies engaged in espionage and commandoes involved in sabotage. We have been rescued from Satan's claws; he cannot ever have us again. We are on another team, part of another body, have different allegiances. We were once for Satan and against God; now we are against Satan and for God (Matt. 6:24). If God is for us, who can be against us?³¹

Under Grace instead of Judgment. God is satisfied with the death of His Son through propitiation: Jesus takes our place (Rom. 3:24-26). All are justified freely by his grace through the redemption

³⁰ The Benefits of Salvation. Basic Christian Doctrines 35. Available at www.faithbibleonline.net/BasicChristian Doctrine/35.htm Accessed June 6,2011

³¹ Ibid.

that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.”

I John 2:2 He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Romans 8:38-39, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Our eternal security is based on God's love for those whom He has redeemed. Our eternal security is purchased by Christ, promised by the Father, and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

Victorious Living – to be secured in life here after make life victorious over temptations and sin. To be free from worry and fear can lead a life of victory in spite to trials and tastings. Much so even in victories – can be humbling to people of God knowing that God indeed is in control both life her on earth and heaven.

James 1:2-4 says:

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

“Many times when we approach an obstacle or a trial in our life, our goal is to remove it. Get rid of it. To leap over it with a single bound! But have you stopped to consider that maybe that obstacle has a different purpose than just being a hurdle in the race of life?”³²

Indeed we can have a victorious life with Christ who promises to strengthen us (Phil 1:13).

Work in progress, sanctified, from glory to glory Sanctified I Cor 1:30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

³² Overcoming Obstacles - You Can *Have a Victorious* Spiritual *Life*. Available at www.taberstruths.com/overcoming-obstacles-you-can-have.html Accessed June 16, 2011

1 Cor. 6:11: And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. As one ministers and see how frail the people one is ministering, one can also get comfort that Christians are works on progress. This is true not only on how we deal with others but also on our self. When we begin to be impatient in our stumbling and falling – we can stand up and move on.

Gerry Molato said,

Eternal security provides the ground for sanctification. This is essential because ministry is about calling people toward progress in holiness in every aspect of life. Eternal security does not say: “it does not matter if believers continue to live in sin, they are saved eternally anyway.” It is a misunderstanding to say eternal security encourages sin. On the contrary, eternal security not only encourages holiness, but provides for its possibility because we can trust that the God “who began a good work (of salvation) in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).³³

X-rayed Extremes. There will be extremes in one’s belief. However it maybe, one need to examine the doctrine in order that the belief is always biblical.

In Pastoral Theology, the doctrine of eternal security avoids the abuse of power by a pastor. Without it, the pastor can threaten members of eternal damnation on any grounds and demand cash or kind to alleviate or fix the situation. Insecurity will coerce church members to do what their pastors demand for fear of losing their soul.

On the other hand, with eternal security, members can be lax in the ministry. Since members will think that they are already saved no matter what, their current actions (or inaction) here on earth is without any repercussion on the after life. So this doctrine can both have positive and negative effects. It must be approached with care, or else can be abused by either the pastor or the church members.³⁴

In spite of what your view is, Louis Owusu-Bempah challenged us all to be involved in the great commission. He said

When it comes to “the doctrine of eternal security” or “perseverance of saints,” I see two schools of thought or positions in Christendom. Nevertheless, whatever being one’s position, it should not affect the Great Commandment, nor the Great Commission for Jesus sees it as primary (Lk. 10:17, Mt. 28:16-20).³⁵

³³ Gerry Molato.

³⁴ Mhac Janapin, e-mail message to Lizette Knight, May 26, 2011.

³⁵ Louis Owusu-Bempah, e mail message to Lizette Knight, April 22, 2011

Yielded life. Because we have the assurance that Christ is in us and that the Holy Spirit dwells in us, then we can stop striving and yield to God fully. “As believers, God has called us to a life of yielding vs. striving. Yet, many Christians live in a frustrated state because they are “working hard” to do what they are powerless to do. In your own power, you cannot obey God, forgive those who offend you, or fulfill your destiny – unless you are empowered by the Holy Spirit. The real secret to the Christian life is YIELDING to Christ and allowing Him to live His life through you. Learning to “yield” will set you free from the self-life and give you the peace that you yearn for. YIELDING is the secret key to experiencing the fruit of the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, and every other aspect of the Christian life.³⁶

Zealous waiting for Christ Coming. As we continue to yield out lives to God –then we can wait with zealousness to His coming or until He will take us home. Bucknell wrote,

Waiting upon Christ shows the exciting way Christians are to wait for the return of Jesus Christ and practical ways this hope shapes our lives. Waiting upon God has no more exciting task than to wait for Christ's return. A Christian was never meant to live on earth as if this was their total experience. Our lives here are like waiting for a bus. We have somewhere else to go. We have something else to do.³⁷

For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds. (Titus 2:11-13). “When the Master returns it would be everlasting joy for the elect.”³⁸

Let's anticipate his coming. “He who testifies to these things says, “Yes, I am coming soon.” Rev. 22:20. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

³⁶ Jason, Peebels, The Secret of Yielding, available at https://worldoutreach.org/study_guides/yielding8.5x11.pdf, accessed June 16, 2011

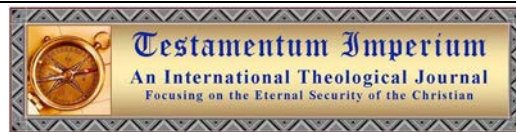
³⁷ Paul J. Bucknell, “Waiting upon Christ's Return” available at <http://www.foundationsforfreedom.net/Topics/WaitingOnGod/WaitUpon018.html>. Accessed June 16, 2011

³⁸ Francis Dwira, e-mail message to Lizette Knight, May 14, 2011

Conclusion

The need to measure if there is relationship between doctrine of the security of believers to the variables like church growth, personal well-being, faith as lifelong process and other variables mentioned by the respondents. Further, it will be interesting to know if there are significant differences between the desire for Christ-likeness to those who believe in the perseverance of the saints and those who do not.

What an array of benefits to keep on believing in eternal security and to persevere as a sinner saved by grace. The principles and practices gleamed from this research still need further study in terms of the challenge that in spite of the assurance of our salvation –one can still persevere in holiness and purity.



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