

Eternal Security ~ Part 2

Glossary of Terms

In my last post, I introduced this new series and began to answer the question of ... **Can Salvation Be Lost?** I stated: *"The reason I want to tackle this topic is simply because I want to know in my knower and heart what it is I really believe about eternal security."* So, let's get started.

In this post, I thought it might be helpful to start with a basic glossary of terms that will be discussed in more detail in this series, but may not be widely understood. Unless otherwise stated, all definitions are from the New Unger's Bible Dictionary by Merrill F. Unger. I've taken the liberty of editing some of the definitions for brevity. As most of my readers know, my default Bible is the Complete Jewish Bible translated by David H. Stern.

Apostasy A "falling away." The common classical use of the word has to do with a political defection (see Genesis 14:4, 2 Chronicles 13:6, Acts 5:37). In the NT its more usual meaning is that of a religious defection (see Acts 21:21; 1 Tim. 4:1; Hebrews 3:12). This is called "apostasy from the faith:" a secession from the church, and a disowning of the name of Christ. The grave nature of apostasy is shown by such passages as Hebrews 10:26-29, 2 Peter 2:15-21, and John 15:22. Apostasy as the act of a professed Christian, who knowingly and deliberately rejects revealed truth regarding the deity of Christ (1 John 4:1-3) and redemption through His atoning sacrifice (Phil. 3:18; 2 Peter 2:1) is different from error, which may be the result of ignorance (Acts 19:1-6), or heresy, which may be the result of falling into the snare of Satan (2 Tim. 2:25-26). Both error and heresy may accordingly be consistent with true faith. On the other hand, apostasy departs from the faith but not from the outward profession of it (2 Tim. 3:5). Apostasy, whether among the angels (Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:15; Jude 1:6), in Israel (Isaiah 1:1-6; Isaiah 5:5-7), or in the church (Revelation 3:14-16) is irremediable and awaits judgment. Mankind's apostasy in Adam (Genesis 3:6-7) is curable only through the sacrifice of Christ. Apostates apparently can only be professors and not actual possessors of true salvation, otherwise their defection would incur severe chastening or, if this failed to restore them, untimely (physical) death (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Cor. 11:32; 1 John 5:16).

Assurance A term brought into theology from the Scriptures, sometimes used broadly by theologians as referring to certitude respecting the validity of Christian revelation; most commonly employed to denote the firm persuasion of one's own salvation. The latter must of course include the former. In experience the two are closely connected. In both senses assurance is a product of the Holy Spirit (Colossians 2:2; Hebrews 6:11; Hebrews 10:22).

As to the assurance of personal salvation it must be emphasized that this must not be confused with the eternal security of a genuine Believer. The latter is a fact due to God's faithfulness whether it is realized by the Believer or not, whereas the former is that which one believes is true respecting himself at any given moment.

Election Unger divides his definition based upon the subject: Biblical Meaning, The Calvinistic View and the Armenian view. Here is the Biblical Meaning: This word in the Scriptures has three distinct applications.

1. To the divine choice of nations or communities for the possession of special privileges with reference to the performance of special services. Thus the Jews were "a chosen nation," "the elect." Thus also in the NT, bodies of Christian people, or churches, are called "the elect."

2. To the divine choice of individuals to a particular office or work. Thus Cyrus was elected of God to bring about the rebuilding of the Temple, and thus the twelve were chosen to be apostles and Paul to be the apostle to the Gentiles.
3. To the divine choice of individuals to be the children of God, and therefore heirs of heaven.

We will look at The Calvinistic View and the Armenian view when we examine each doctrine.

Security

The doctrine that maintains the continuation of salvation for those who are saved. It must be distinguished from the doctrine of *assurance*. It must also be clearly remembered that it concerns only the regenerate (saved). The doctrine of security is based upon twelve undertakings of God for His people, four related to the Father, four to the Son, and four to the Holy Spirit. I will unpack these undertakings in my next post.

Unpardonable Sin

This was a specific sin possible only during the earthly life of our Lord, when He was ministering in the power of the Holy Spirit. Under those unique conditions a person who attributed to Satan the power of the Holy Spirit, so visibly and openly manifested, was guilty of this peculiar sin. For this reason, there could be no forgiveness in the age then present or in the age immediately following (Matthew 12:22-32; Mark 3:22-30). Since no such conditions exist in this age, the unpardonable sin is now impossible. An unpardonable sin and the gospel of "whosoever will" cannot coexist. Were such a sin possible today, every gospel invitation would specifically shut out those who had committed such a trespass. **My Note:** This is not the same as *grieving the Holy Spirit* found in Ephesians 4:30.

The following are only brief definition which I will spend whole posts unpacking.

Both definitions are from The Moody Handbook on Theology by Paul Enns

Arminianism

A doctrinal system formed by Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) as a reaction to Calvinism in the Netherlands. These beliefs were later affirmed in the five points of the Remonstrance:

1. Conditional election based on God's foreknowledge.
2. Unlimited atonement.
3. Although man has a free will he cannot save himself.
4. Prevenient grace, which enables man to cooperate with God in salvation.
5. Conditional perseverance - Believers can be lost.

Calvinism

A doctrinal system expressed in the following five points formulated by John Calvin, frequently referred to with the acronym ~ TULIP.

1. Total depravity of man.
2. Unconditional election.
3. Limited atonement.
4. Irresistible grace.
5. Perseverance of the saints.

The sovereignty of God is central in Calvinism.

In my next post, we will start to unpack the topic of Eternal Security.