

# What We Teach – A Journey thru the KBC Doctrinal Statement “Eternal Security” – February 13, 2022

## Issues Surrounding Eternal Security

The doctrine of eternal security concerns questions regarding the nature of salvation, grace, faith, and works along with questions of God’s role and the believer’s role in salvation and sanctification. The doctrine also intersects with questions about assurance. Some Christians believe you can lose your salvation while others hold to a false view of eternal security (e.g., note the vague and misleading phrase: “once saved, always saved”).

## Preservation of the Saints

We teach that all the redeemed once justified are kept by God’s power through faith and are therefore secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24).

True believers are preserved by God...

Every believer chosen, redeemed, and justified by God is kept by God’s gracious promise and power so they can never finally fall away from the faith, rather they are preserved forever because “the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Rom. 11:29). The grace that saves us also sustains us until we are glorified and conformed to Christ (Rom. 8:29-30; Titus 2:11-12).

- 1 Peter 1:1-9 (see also Jude 1:24-25)
- John 10:27-30 (see also John 5:24; 6:37-40)
- Romans 8:1, 29-39 (see also Rom. 5:9-10)
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 (see also Heb. 7:25; 10:14)

## Perseverance of the Saints

True believers are preserved by God and will persevere in the faith (Col. 1:21-23; Heb. 3:6, 14).

We teach that genuine salvation bears “fruit in keeping with repentance” as demonstrated in growing righteous attitudes and conduct (Matthew 3:8). Initially, the fruit of regeneration is faith in Christ and repentance from sin, followed by a life of increasing good works and growth in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). Good works and the fruit of the Spirit will be experienced to the extent the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-11). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). Such conformity is climaxed in the believer’s glorification at the Rapture of the Church (Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3).

Even though believers are divinely elected (Eph. 1:4) and then effectually called by the Spirit in due time (Gal. 1:15-16), we are summoned to “be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you” (2 Pet. 1:10). Paul says, “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you-- unless indeed you fail the test?” (2 Cor. 13:5). There are many false converts who are not truly chosen and regenerated by the Spirit. John says such people “went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us” (1 John 2:19).

- Final salvation is conditioned on persevering in the faith. Without “sanctification...no one will see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14). See John 8:31 (cf. John 15:1-11); 1 Cor. 15:1-2; Col. 1:21-23; 2 Tim. 2:11-12 (see also Mark 13:13; Rev. 2:7, 17, 25-26; 3:5, 11-12, 21).
- The active perseverance of believers is guaranteed by the internal enabling grace of God. He ensures that we will indeed persevere. See Jer. 24:7; 32:40; 1 Cor. 15:10; Eph. 3:20; Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; Col. 1:29; 2:6-7; Heb. 13:20-21; Jude 1:21, 24.

## Assurance of Salvation

It is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God’s Word, which forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14).

Note a believer can be truly saved but lack assurance, usually due to lack of knowledge, lack of faith, unrepentant sin, or failure to perceive progress in holiness. Likewise, a false convert can have full assurance of salvation that turns out to be false assurance, usually due to false knowledge or misplaced faith. Assurance of salvation is rooted in two objective realities.

- 1) **The Promises of God.** These are rooted in His sovereign decree (election) and unassailable grace and the enabling (preserving) power that attends His grace.
- 2) **The Fruit of Sanctification.** As believers persevere in the good fruits of their sanctification, they amass tangible evidence for the genuineness of their salvation.

**Trust** and **obedience** are the twin pillars of assurance.

## Apostasy

However, those who once professed faith but subsequently deny the Lordship of Jesus Christ, turning away from Him, demonstrate by their apostasy that they were never truly saved (1 John 2:19).

Failure to exhibit long term **trust** in Christ as Lord and Savior together with His Word in addition to steadfast **obedience** to His Word is a demonstration that true saving faith was never present in the first place. Note the Parable of the Sower (Matt. 13:3-9; 18-23; Luke 8:4-15).

## **The Character of Genuine Saving Faith**

(From *The MacArthur Study Bible*)

2 Corinthians 13:5 - Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you-- unless indeed you fail the test?

### **1. Evidences that neither Prove nor Disprove One's Faith**

- A. Visible Morality – Matt. 19:16-21; 23:27
- B. Intellectual Knowledge – Rom. 1:21; 2:17ff.
- C. Religious Involvement – Matt. 25:1-10
- D. Active Ministry – Matt. 7:21-24
- E. Conviction of Sin – Acts 24:25
- F. Assurance – Matt. 23
- G. Time of Decision – Luke 8:13, 14

### **2. The Fruit (Proofs) of Authentic (True) Christianity**

- A. Love for God – Psa. 42:1ff; 73:25; Luke 10:27; Rom. 8:7
- B. Repentance from Sin – Psa. 32:5; Prov. 28:13; Rom. 7:14ff; 2 Cor. 7:10; 1 John 1:8-10
- C. Genuine Humility – Psa. 51:17; Matt. 5:1-12; James 4:6, 9ff.
- D. Devotion to God's Glory – Psa. 105:3; 115:1; Isa. 43:7; 48:10ff; Jer. 9:23-24; 1 Cor. 10:31
- E. Continual Prayer – Luke 18:1; Eph. 6:18ff; Phil. 4:6ff; 1 Tim. 2:1-4; James 5:16-18
- F. Selfless Love – 1 John 2:9ff; 3:14; 4:7ff.
- G. Separation from the World – 1 Cor. 2:12; James 4:14ff; 1 John 2:15-17; 5:5
- H. Spiritual Growth – Luke 8:15; John 15:1-6; Eph. 4:12-16
- I. Obedient Living – Matt. 7:21; John 15:14ff; Rom. 16:26; 1 Pet. 1:2, 22; 1 John 2:3-5
- J. Hunger for God's Word – 1 Pet. 2:1-3
- K. Transformation of Life – 2 Cor. 5:17

If list 1 is true of a person and list 2 is false, there is cause to question the validity of one's profession of faith. Yet if List 2 is true, then list 1 will be also.

### **3. The Conduct of the Gospel**

- A. Proclaim it – Matt. 4:23
- B. Defend it – Jude 3
- C. Demonstrate it – Phil. 1:27
- D. Share it – Phil. 1:5
- E. Suffer for it – 2 Tim. 1:8
- F. Don't Hinder it – 1 Cor. 9:12
- G. Be not Ashamed of it – Rom. 1:16
- H. Preach it – 1 Cor. 9:16
- I. Be Empowered by it – 1 Thess. 1:5
- J. Guard it – Gal. 1:6-8