

ETERNAL SECURITY (49)

(Obstacle #1) - There must be a Divine conquering of the sinner's sin .

(Obstacle #2) - There must be a Divine conquering of the sinner's will .

True sovereign grace requires that man, in and of himself, can do nothing about these two obstacles in order to make himself right with a Holy God. If there were something man could do in regard to these realities, then salvation is no longer pure grace, but part grace and

part works - something which is clearly contrary to the revealed, written Word of God (**i.e. Ephesians 2:8-9**). If salvation is part grace and part works, then it may be lost by the part works side. If salvation is all grace, then it cannot be lost by demerit because it was not earned by merit.

The Bible clearly states that the sin problem is only conquered by Jesus Christ (**John 1:29; II Corinthians 5:19**)! No human can conquer his own sin problem. No human can, in and of himself, conquer his own will problem. The conquering of sin and the will is a matter of sovereign grace. To determine this is true, we must examine the Bible. God clearly says "there is **none** that seeks for God" (**Romans 3:11**). Since no one seeks God, how is it that man's mind is awakened to the fact that he is a sinner and that he is in need of the saving work of Jesus Christ? How did the person come to the point in which he realized that in and of himself, man can do nothing to merit everlasting life: How did he come to the point in time that, from his perspective, he chose to believe on Jesus Christ? The answer is - by the sovereign grace of God, specifically by the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit (**John 6:44; 16:7-11**).

Dr. William Cunningham, a Scottish theologian of the 1800s, gave an accurate theological description of how the process works: "In the commencement of the process, they (lost men) are not actors at all; they are wholly passive - the subjects of divine operation. And from the time when they begin to act in the matter, or really do anything, they act freely and voluntarily, guided by rational motives derived from the truths which their eyes have been opened to see, and which, humanly speaking, might have sooner led them to turn to God, had not the moral impotency of their will to do anything spiritually good prevented this result" (*Ibid.*, p. 285).

It is not the will of man that makes the difference in salvation; it is the will of God ! If God allowed all men to go the way of their own will, all would go to hell for all have wandered away from God and have hearts that are desperately wicked (**Isaiah 53:6; Jeremiah 17:9**). The only reason any person comes to true salvation is because God chooses to allow the person to see and sense his need for salvation. Without this work of God, man will not seek God (**Romans 3:11-12**). Salvation is by God's Sovereign grace.

QUESTION #13 – How does the Arminian emphasize human experience and reason?

Although the Arminian will appeal to various verses of the Bible (which we will examine), for the most part, the Arminian relies more upon his experience and reason more than God's revelation . Dr. Chafer observed this when he wrote: "Though Scripture is cited by Arminians to defend their contention that the Christian is not secure...their appeal is usually more to experience and reason than to the testimony of the Bible" (*Ibid.*, p. 286).

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When the Arminian refers to human experience, it is often stated that there has been some individual who was once a Christian, but now is no longer a Christian. Some illustration or possible illustration is usually cited. In such examples, two major mistakes of assumption are made:

- 1) In such a case, it cannot be fully proved that the person was ever truly saved.
- 2) In such a case, it cannot be fully proved that the person ever became unsaved.

The truth is, in any such illustration, it is impossible to know exactly what the truth is because we cannot see the heart. Therefore, to base one's view of eternal security on the actions of supposedly one who has lost salvation is completely irrational and illogical.

Very often an Arminian will cite as a Biblical example of one who can lose his salvation Judas. But the Bible is very specific to point out that Judas was never a true believer (**John 6:64**). Furthermore, this is a very poor example for the Arminian to cite, for the Bible clearly teaches that Judas was, in fact, a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy (**John 13:18; 17:12/Psalm 41:9**). God's revealed Word also informs us that the choosing of Judas was done by Jesus Christ with the cross in view (**John 6:70-71**). Since Christ clearly reveals He is the One who gives eternal life to all the Father gives to Him (**John 17:2, 6, 9, 11, 12**) and since the Bible reveals that life was not given to Judas (**John 17:12**), we may safely conclude that Judas was not ever saved, which means he was not chosen to be saved. **Judas is not an example of one who possessed life and lost it, but one who professed life and never had it.**

Another example of the experiential emphasis of the Arminian is his reasoning regarding who it is that actually loses salvation. Most Arminians will state that the cause of losing one's salvation is sin. The general belief is that sin can unsave a Christian. If you pursue the matter and ask if any sin can cause one to lose his salvation, usually the answer is no, not any sin, but only certain large and terrible sins. Some Arminians develop a distorted distinction in their minds between mistakes and sins.

This type of thinking causes the Biblically-based believer to ask, "How can a believer sin and lose his salvation when the Bible clearly states that Jesus Christ died on the cross to **take away all** our sin?" (**Acts 13:38-39; Romans 3:23-26; 4:5; I Corinthians 15:3**).

Furthermore, if the Arminian is challenged to explain why the Bible promises "no condemnation" to the one who believes on Christ (**John 3:18; 5:24; Romans 8:1, 34**), no logical answer or defense can be given which satisfies the revealed Word. Removal of sin is never the work of man or by the sacrifice of animals (**Hebrews 9:11-22**), it was only by the work of Jesus Christ.

Perhaps the most famous Arminian rationalization of all is to say that eternal security is the same as saying that a believer can live a godless life doing whatever he pleases. Such a belief is based on the misconception that God must hold over the head of the believer the fact that he can lose his salvation in order to motivate His children to obey Him. However, it must be pointed out that the vast majority of those who are disciplined and do obey God and do follow God's leading everywhere and anywhere are those who believe and teach that a believer cannot ever lose his salvation - Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Spurgeon, Chafer, Hodge, McGee, Swindoll, MacArthur, Miles, etc. ... These men have explicitly taught one cannot lose his salvation and yet they stayed

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totally committed to God and His Word. Furthermore, if the teaching that you may lose your salvation is designed to prevent one from falling into sin, how do we explain that two of the greatest proponents of this false belief system in our age have fallen into such terrible sin that the entire world laughs at them - Jimmy Swaggart and Jim Bakker. Obviously their Arminian doctrine did not prevent them from sin. Certainly their sin would be at a level that would require one to lose his salvation, for in both cases their sin disgraced God on a national and international level. What we learn from this is that believer you can lose your salvation does not prevent one from sinning, it only promotes false doctrine.

QUESTION #14 – What are the passages that the Arminian says proves you can lose your salvation?

We begin this important section with a quote from Lewis Sperry Chafer:

“Of all the contentions offered by Arminians, their appeal to the Scriptures is that feature most worthy of candid consideration; for it will be admitted by all who attempt to expound the Word of God that there are several passages, which, when taken in what appears on the surface to be their meaning, do seem to imply that one once saved might be lost again. The challenge is one respecting exact meaning of the portions of Scripture involved and how in the Divine mind, since the Word of God cannot contradict itself, they are to be harmonized with a much greater array of Scripture testimony – a body of truth which Arminians seldom essay to discuss – which permit of no varied interpretations and which dogmatically assert the eternal security of the true child of God. The challenge is also how these supposed insecurity passages may be made to harmonize with the truth of the believer’s position both in the elective purpose of God, as an object of sovereign grace, and in the body of Christ with all that that membership secures. It will be seen also, that there is no strain placed upon those Scriptures, when so interpreted that they harmonize with the passages which declare the safekeeping of Christians. Over against this, the passages asserting security, along with the demands of the doctrine of sovereign election and sovereign grace, can be interpreted in but one way, unless great violence is done to them by the taking from or adding to them of mere human opinions. That Arminians do not discuss them is a significant fact in itself” (Vol. 3, pp. 290-291).

Dr. Chafer makes some very valid points regarding the Arminians’ appeal to Scripture:

- 1) They neglect the context .
- 2) They fail to attempt to interpret the passage in which the verse actually sits.
- 3) They fail to harmonize their pet passages with other passages that contradict their position.
- 4) They totally neglect the Biblical doctrines of Divine Election and Divine Grace.
- 5) They do not consider the matter of Divine Sovereignty.

One cannot disregard these critical matters of interpretation and expect to come to a true interpretation.