**ETERNAL SECURITY PRINCIPLES (Free Grace Theology term)**

Question: Is it possible for a believer to “fall away from the faith, deny the faith” and still have eternal life?

1. Eternal Security emphasizes the keeping power of God not our keeping power over our salvation - John 6:39-40, John 10:27-29; Jude 24; Philippians 1:6; I Corinthians 10:13; II Thessalonians 3:3; II Timothy 1:12; I Peter 5:10

2. Eternal Security emphasizes the promise of Christ- John 6:37; Hebrews 7:25, John 10:27-29 (claiming loss of salvation is saying “My good Shepherd stopped loving me.”)

3. Eternal Security emphasizes the love of God - Romans 8:38-39; I John 4:10, 19 “Nothing shall separate us from God’s love”!

4. Eternal Security is result of receiving the gift of eternal life - John 3:15-16, 36; John 4:14, 36; John 5:24, 39; John 6:27, 40, 47, 68

5. The discipline of God is a proof of your eternal security for God does not discipline illegitimate children - Hebrews 12:5-13

 a. Belief in an insecure salvation is an affront to the Fatherhood of God.

 b. The Calvinist “perseverance of the saved” is a companion truth to the eternal security of the believer but is based upon predestination of the elect in eternity past without freewill involved.

6. The primary marks of identification for a true believer are:

 a. Continuance in Christ’s word 1 John 8:31

 b. Chastening by the Lord Hebrews 12:5-12; Matthew 7:20; I John 3:9

 c. Fruit of the Spirit – Galatians 5:22-23

7. True faith produces fruit or divine good works - Matthew 7:15-20; Matthew 13:23; James 2:17; Ephesians 2:10

8. A believer can sin, even move into reversionism and deny the faith but they cannot lose their salvation. Best example of this is Peter denying the Lord three times (Luke 22:31-32) and then recovering (John 21).

 a. Believers such as Hymenaeus and Philetus wandered away from the truth by accepting Gnosticism’s view of the resurrection as an allegory rather than a real, literal, physical resurrection. 2 Timothy 2:17-18.

 b. 2 Tim 2:19 God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription; “The Lord knows His believers for they confess the name of the Lord and turn away from wickedness”. “sealed” is mark of authentication and ownership.

9. Objective measures of true faith

a. The primary direction and characteristics of the person’s life - I John 3:9-"No one who is born of God practices sin…,” Matthew 7:20--"You will recognize them by their fruits"

b. Works of the flesh versus the Fruit of the Spirit - Galatians 5:19-24

c. The wisdom from below versus the wisdom from above -James 3:12-18

d. The works of darkness versus the fruit of the Light - Ephesians 5:5-11

e. The unrighteous lifestyle -I Corinthians 6:9-11

f. Love for the world versus love of the Father - I John 2:15-17

g. Love for the brethren - I John 3:14

h. Keeping God’s commandments - I John 2:4; Titus 1:16

10. While it is distinctly possible for a true believer to have significant moments of disobedience and unfruitfulness, the focus of the lists above is on the primary direction of his life - Romans 7:19; I John 2:1; II Peter 1:5-10

11. According to Hebrews 3:12-14, an apostate will have an attitude of defiance and rebellion (wilderness generation - unbelief of the believer).

a. This is true except in the case of those whom Satan seeks to disguise. These are unbelievers parading as Christians. Matthew 7:15; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

b. If an individual in question displays very little shame or sorrow with regard to sin, and very little desire for God and His Word, we should be concerned about his spirituality, reversionism status, or perhaps even his salvation. 2 Corinthians 7:10-11; I Peter 2:1-3

c. When we are trying to reach someone in question, it may be helpful to point him to these passages to prompt him toward healthy self-examination

The person who openly practices sin without repentance in the areas stated above should be encouraged not to announce their ‘supposed identification with Christ’.

 2 Timothy 2:19b: "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness.”

12. A closing question; Why are serious warnings addressed to believers if it is impossible for a true believer to DENY THE FAITH, FALL INTO REVERSIONISM, OR ultimately practicing the Christian life?

1. To begin with, sometimes in our effort to preserve a non-works, eternally secure salvation, we fail to realize how close someone can come toward salvation without ever really obtaining it.

 b. It is possible for people to come into the Christian community and culturally adjust by learning acceptable practices and words, and yet deceive both themselves and the community as to the reality of their salvation. The most fearful illustration of this is Judas Iscariot.

John 13:21, Jesus revealed to the twelve that one of them would betray Him. The disciples were stunned it might be one of them.!

John 13:22 informs us that they were at a loss to know of whom He was speaking. Judas had so cunningly hidden his true identity that none of the others immediately thought of him as an unbeliever, deceiver.

1. In fact, a parallel gospel informs us that "each one began to say to Him, ‘Surely not I, Lord?’" (Matthew 26:22).

13. Purposes for the warnings passages about reversionism, denial of faith.

a. The warnings are directed to those who were contemplating a return to Judaism - Hebrews 6:9-12; 10:32-35, 10:39- Believers CAN abandon truth for religion.

b. The warnings balance man’s responsibility with the work of God, thus bringing the whole matter into focus - II Peter 1:10

c. The warnings encourage healthy self-examination -e.g. Jesus reveals that one will betray Him.

d. The warnings serve a preventative purpose

e. They are instrumental as a divine means of keeping believers on the right path

f. The warnings expose the ones who depart as being apostates - I John 2:19

 g. The warnings indicate the danger of the hardening effect of sinning against the light of God’s revelation.

14. Now, what is the relationship between Eternal Security and compound carnality? Say a person is born again at a point in time, they begin to grow. Three examples to look at:

(1) A person who doesn’t have compound carnality, they grow, they have reversals; they grow some more, they have some more reversals; grow some more, more reversals, this kind of a thing, but the gradual curve is upwards until death. And then of course there’s perfection after death.

(2) Now let’s take a person who starts to grow and then all of a sudden they spiral downward into carnality. What happens to them?

The answer to that problem is Hebrews 12, where God says if that happens, and it’s to a true believer then God is going to constantly administer discipline on that person and if necessary take them out by physical death.

An illustration of that was 1 Corinthians 11, the communion service, that people messed around with communion were just simply eliminated, physically, from the congregation. And that’s a sign of their salvation, the fact that God deals with them so severely.

Compound carnality will always have its reward, namely, a spanking from the Father, of a very sever order. Hebrews 12 clearly states that someone in this state who is not being spanked is a bastard.

(3) Then we come to the person who seems to show fruit of conversion, and then spirals off and nothing ever happens. And that person is a Judas Iscariot.

That’s the point the Bible is warning about. Remember it was a deep psychological shock to the disciples to eat, to sleep, to preach with Judas over a three-year period in the direct proximity of the Son of God and show utterly no sign of salvation whatsoever in his soul.

Unbelievers can do human good works that look like divine good works and you may not be able to tell the difference.

Matthew 7:21-23 states what a unbeliever can do like Judas Iscariot. “But many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not” do this, did we not do that, and Jesus says I never once knew you.” (Οὐδέποτε Never , egnōn ἔγνων - knew I - Aor Act Indic) they were like Judas.

Unbelievers are capable of miracles, capable of casting out demons in Christ’s name, and they are capable of calling Jesus Lord, at least with their lips, though not with their heart because Corinthians says no one can call Christ “Lord” truly unless the Holy Spirit indwells him. (1 Corin. 12:3)

This means in fact ‘never once did He know them’ means they never were regenerate in the first place. So now Jesus shifts to parables to keep truth from the pretenders who claim to be Christians.

All parables are derived from the life at the time. The story gives an outward literal sense of a matter, which anyone can understand.

However, the interpretation of these parables requires deduction compatible with known Bible doctrine. All these parables will describe what goes on with the Jews while they are under the 5TH Cycle of Discipline.