

## ETERNAL SECURITY (38)

**Reality #2** – The resurrection has seated the believer in the heavenlies. **Ephesians 2:4-6**

the Apostle Paul is very careful to point out that it was God who raised us up out of our sin when we were, in fact, dead in our trespasses and sins (**Ephesians 2:1**). In other words, when we were spiritually dead, God, by His grace, mercy, and love, reached into our dead souls and made us spiritually alive (**Ephesians 2:4-5**). This is the same supernatural power that raised Jesus Christ when He was physically dead (**Ephesians 2:5**). According to Paul, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is so intricately connected to the believer that, in the mind of God, the believer is already seated with Christ in heavenly places (**Ephesians 2:6**).

Certainly any sane person would be forced to admit that it would be impossible for the resurrected Christ to ever cease to be the resurrected Christ. Once Christ died He was raised never to die again. In fact, the Bible is clear and emphatic to point out that Christ would only die “once” (**Hebrews 9:27-28; 10:14**). The picture is clear; Christ died once and was raised once. The questions are “Why” and “For what”? The answer is - **He died to save sinners and He arose to prove He does save sinners and He does give life**. In the mind of God, any person who has been saved is so identified with the work of Jesus Christ that he is already seated in the heavenlies. One who is seated in the heavenlies cannot die again and not be seated in the heavenlies. If one has trusted Christ, he is spiritually alive and seated in the heavenlies and cannot spiritually die again, because he has already been raised to new life. The loss of salvation becomes an impossibility for one who has been saved by God. Once he has been raised up he cannot die again, which means he cannot lose his salvation.

How is it possible for any sinful person to be seated in the heavenlies with God’s Holy Son? It is possible through the resurrection power that has made the soul that was once spiritually dead, spiritually alive. When the believer finally gets to heaven, he will no longer sin; but until he does get to heaven, there will be times when the old nature wins. That, however, cannot cause one to be unseated from the heavenlies, for it was Christ’s resurrection power that put him there.

**(Reason #3)** - A believer cannot possibly lose his salvation because of Christ’s advocacy.  
**Romans 8:34c**

A critical passage that deals with this subject and refutes any thought that a child of God could lose his salvation is **I John 2:1**. It is very clear from this one verse that the addressee is a believer - “my little children” - and the subject is his sin. **It is also very clear from this context that when a believer does sin, which is implied in this very text, it is not regeneration for salvation that is needed; it is confession for fellowship that is needed (1:3, 7, 9).**

The term “advocate” is one that has legal meaning. It is a word that describes a judicial setting in which a friend of the accused person, who has a legal right to speak on behalf of the person, is called to aid and intercede in behalf of the person in a legal matter (G. Abbott-Smith, pp. 340-341).

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It is quite clear from this verse that the precise point is that if any child of God since (“my little children” refers exclusively to believers), he cannot be legally condemned for his sin before God because he has an advocate who is our friend, who has a legal right to come to our aid thus negating any potential condemnation.

Accusations before God the Father are made by Satan (**Revelation 12:10**). These accusations are presented when the believer sins. But, as Dr. Chafer says, “...the prosecution by Satan cannot avail, for there is an Advocate, a Defender. What this means every hour to the believer will never be known in this life. The truth representing the advocacy of Christ is in view in these declarations: ‘who is even at the right hand of God’ (**Romans 8:34**) and ‘now to appear in the presence of God for us’ (**Hebrews 9:24**)” (Vol. 3, p. 331).

If this passage is teaching anything, it is most definitely to give assurance to the believer that even in moments of sin the believer has Jesus Christ on his side. Although Christ does not condone a believer’s sin, He certainly will not condemn a believer who does sin. He may chastise the believer, but He will never condemn the believer to hell.

Again Dr. Chafer’s words concerning Christ’s Advocacy are important:

“(1) He presents the evidence of His own sacrifice for the sin in question - the truth that He bore it fully on the cross. Thus when the Father withholds condemnation, His ground for doing so is just since the Savior has died. It is in direct line with this aspect of the Advocate’s work that this very context goes on to say: ‘And He is the propitiation for our sins.’ By the death of His Son for the Christian’s sin, the Father is rendered propitious. (2) Christ is made unto the believer righteousness (I Cor. 1:30; II Cor. 5:21), and He as the source of this imputed righteousness, is the One by whom the Christian is saved and in whom he stands forever” (*Ibid.* p. 331).

One who claims one can lose his salvation denies the work of Jesus Christ as an Advocate for the believer. Such thinking has not and does not come to terms with the great Biblical truth that once one is saved, he is forever saved because of Christ’s finished work on Calvary which has past, present, and future implications.

The motivation for living a godly life for one who believes he can lose salvation is a fear of losing his salvation. The motivation for living a godly life according to the Bible is a love for God, realizing we, as sinners, have been saved, accepted, sealed by God and now have Jesus Christ acting as our personal, legal Advocate. Jesus Christ has a legal right to act as our Advocate before the Father because He, Himself, is perfectly righteous like the Father. This work as Advocate makes it impossible to lose one’s salvation.

**(Reason #4)** - A believer cannot possibly lose his salvation because of Christ’s intercession.  
**Romans 8:34d**

In many different passages of the N.T., it is revealed that Jesus Christ intercedes on behalf of the believer. Obviously a question which must be answered and one which is often neglected in the

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study of eternal security is, why does He intercede and what does He accomplish by His intercession? **Romans 5:9** informs us that we have peace with God by justification, so what do we need an intercessor to do for us?

As we shall see, the purpose of God revealing this truth is to bring comfort to the believer in moments of need. Those who hold to the position that you can lose your salvation are totally incapable of giving help and strength to the struggling believer because his claim is that one may lose his salvation and thus negate Christ's intercessory work.

There are four major passages that deal with the important intercessory work of Jesus Christ:

### **Intercessory Passage #1 - John 17**

We have already dealt with this text; however, it is important to our study to touch base again with the key points of it. In this passage Christ specifically prays for the safekeeping of those the Father gave to the Son (**17:11**). We may recall that the word "keep" included the idea of watching, guarding, and preserving. We also demonstrated that this intercessory prayer had application, not just for the immediate disciples, but for all who would believe (**17:20**). Having understood these truths, it is quite clear that the **only** way a believer could possibly lose his salvation would be if God the Father refused to answer the prayer of God the Son.

Jesus Christ is God, the second member of the Trinity, and this very fact makes it impossible for Him to pray anything that is ultimately against the will of God. This fact makes the possibility of God the Father not answer His prayer an impossibility.

One who believes he may lose his salvation does not believe in the intercessory prayers made by Jesus Christ which would be answered by the Father. Such thinking is not only theologically inaccurate, but it is also degrading to God the Father and God the Son.

### **Intercessory Passage #2 - Romans 8:34**

In this verse it is explicitly stated that the believer can **never** come into God's condemnation after salvation because Jesus Christ "intercedes for us." It is clear that God wants the believer to realize that once one is saved, he cannot ever be condemned because of Christ's intercessory work. The verb "intercedes" is present tense meaning the action is continuous. God wants us to realize that one reason why we cannot ever be condemned, after we are saved, is because Christ continually intercedes on our behalf.

Jesus Christ continually meets with God the Father and converses with Him about the fact that He has saved us. This reality is one that is supposed to bring comfort to the struggling, sinful believer. It is in moments of failure when the believer needs to remember that Christ is interceding on his behalf, thus making condemnation an impossibility.

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### **Intercessory Passage #3 - Luke 22:31-34**

Undoubtedly, when Christ was here on earth there would be no greater sin than a disciple and apostle could commit than to publicly deny Jesus Christ just hours before His crucifixion. If ever there were a sin that could potentially unsave one who had been saved, it would be the sin of publically cursing and denying the Lord Jesus Christ just prior to His death on the cross. However, it was in the face of this very terrible sin that Christ interceded on behalf of Peter. Combined with other passages regarding Christ's intercessory work, this text proves it is impossible for a believer to lose his salvation even when committing the worst of sins.

The specific prayer that Christ makes on behalf of Peter is that his "faith may not fail." The Greek word "fail" is one that means to leave or cease (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 139). Christ's intercessory prayer for Peter is that while he is being sifted by Satan, and when he has fallen into the sin of denying that he even knows Christ, his faith will not leave or cease. In other words, this is a specific intercessory prayer that Peter would not lose his salvation, which is something Satan would have loved. Then Christ goes on to say that when you finally get "turned," use this experience of yours to strengthen your brothers.

What is Christ saying here? He is saying that Peter should strengthen his sinful brothers in the same way Christ strengthened him - by reminding them of Christ's intercessory work that protects them in the midst of their sin. If Peter would have lost his faith or ceased to be saved, Christ's prayer was not answered. However, we have Biblical proof that Christ's prayer was answered, as Dr. Chafer explains: "The petition which Christ presented for Peter was secured. He prayed that Peter's faith should not fail, and it did not fail, though through all this experience Peter manifested the traits of a believer who is out of communion with his Lord" (Vol. 3, p. 333). Peter failed but his faith didn't. Even though he sinned greatly he was still saved.

One proof that Peter's faith did not cease nor leave him is the fact that when he did get turned around, he did end up strengthening his brothers. One way he did this was by informing his brothers that even in the worst moments of sinful failure, Christ intercedes on our behalf so that we cannot ever lose our faith. Even after committing terrible sin, it is possible for the believer to get turned around and to have intimate fellowship with God to the extent that we can be used to strengthen our brothers.

Again we cite Dr. Chafer: "While this is the record of Christ's prayer for but one man and that man the one who was to deny his Lord, it is reasonable to assume that Christ sustains this same solicitude and care over each individual believer. Doubtless He could say to every believer many times in the day, 'I have prayed for thee'" (*Ibid.*, p. 333).

### **Intercessory Passage #4 - Hebrews 7:23-25**

There is no more direct statement in the New Testament, regarding the impossibility of one losing his salvation because of Christ's intercessory work, than this passage right here. This text makes the unequivocal, absolute claim that the believer in Jesus Christ is forever and eternally saved because of the intercessory work of Jesus Christ.