

Eternal Security 2026

John 3:16 “For (in this manner) God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”

John 3:36 He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

Acts 16:29 And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas,

Acts 16:30 and after he brought them out, he said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

Acts 16:31 They said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”

These passages clearly state that eternal life (salvation) is the result of faith alone in Jesus Christ. There is no work we can provide to attain salvation. This is the stance of the “Free Grace” movement. Faith alone in Christ alone.

But Covenant Theology says that “faith is never alone.” In order to have assurance of your salvation you must produce good works. It says that unbelievers go to the hell suffer the penalty of all of their own sins.

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

At least once a year, the lesson focuses on the doctrine of eternal security because it is important for the believer's assurance of salvation. It is also important because there are many conservative Christians like those who subscribe to Covenant Theology that teach otherwise. You need to know what you believe and why you believe it.

A short note. There is an excellent series on Neo Calvinism versus The Bible by Andy Woods. I am currently making my way through the 50+ sermons on it.

So, the purpose of the lessons on eternal security is to provide the free grace believer with Bible information showing support for assurance of salvation and to combat false doctrine. Here is the link to that series by Andy Woods:

https://slbc.org/series_event/ncvb/

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

The Doctrine of Eternal Security is an important doctrine. It is so important that this is the third time I am teaching it.

1. **Critical.** An Understanding of the doctrine of eternal security is critical to your spiritual life.
2. **Service.** Eternal Security frees the believer to serve God in grace without fear rather than chain him or her to constantly fearing loss of salvation. This effort to maintain salvation can lead to legalism, working from the Old Sin Nature to please God rather than to serve Him by faith dependence on the Holy Spirit. We serve out of gratitude, not from fear.
3. **Documentation.** The doctrine of Eternal Security is well documented in the Bible. There are several different Biblical passages that clearly document that once God has saved an individual based upon that person's faith in Jesus Christ and His work on the cross, the believer will not lose that salvation.
4. **Obligation.** Eternal security leads us to an obligation to serve. God has gifted each believer with a spiritual gift. God has given each believer a mission enhanced by the spiritual gift. We have a code of conduct called love. Love sees a need. The believer's mission enhanced by a spiritual gift provides an obligation to fulfill that need. As a pastor-teacher, I have an obligation to the Church to study and teach. But, this service must be based upon faith-dependence on the Holy Spirit.

“Anyone can devise a plan by which good people may go to Heaven. Only God can devise a plan whereby sinners, who are His enemies, can go to Heaven.” Lewis Sperry Chafer¹

¹ <https://quotefancy.com/quote/1613598/Lewis-Sperry-Chafer-Anyone-can-devise-a-plan-by-which-good-people-may-go-to-Heaven-Only>

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

As we approach this doctrine, there are several questions that come to mind that need to be answered:

1. Is Salvation defined by the Bible or by man?
2. What kind of salvation does God provide?
3. Who is responsible for the Plan of Salvation?
4. Can a believer lose his/her salvation?
5. Is personal sin greater than Christ's work on the cross?

The previous lesson on eternal security, which addresses these in more detail is found at

<https://www.springvalleybiblechurch.org/Audio/Romans/notes/20240414Romans242.pdf>

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

Herman and other pastors I listened to over the years talked about churches that would claim that if you did certain sins, you were not saved. It didn't matter if you believed in Jesus Christ as savior. If you committed certain sins, that was evidence for your damnation.

Now I was familiar with the Catholic Church. There were what they called "mortal" sins. If you committed one of those, like playing hooky on Sunday and not going to church and you died without confessing your sins to a priest, you would go straight to hell.

Some Protestant churches say you have to do "good" to prove your salvation.

I thought those were just some backwater churches that didn't know better.

But now, as a pastor researching eternal security, I find that those kinds of churches are in the majority and our "free grace" church is in the minority. Rather than just tell you about them, paraphrasing what they say, I am going to quote from a respected Reformed Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem. This is to provide documentation that non-Free Grace theology exists and is flourishing.

Reformed theology which is derived from the reformer John Calvin and his associates calls their version of eternal security the "perseverance of the saints." It is the "P" in the TULIP acronym used to identify what they believe. This lesson is only looking at the "P" of TULIP. The point is that you see there are many Protestants who have a very different world view from Free Grace.

Perseverance of the saints is chapter 40 of Grudem's work on Systematic Theology. Below are a series of quotes from that chapter.

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

“The perseverance of the saints means that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God’s power and will persevere as Christians until the end of their lives and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again.²”

“In response to the question, “How many good works does one have to do in order to be assured of salvation?” the proper answer is “Some.” To be more specific some change of life gives a basis for some measure of assurance, and a greater change of life gives a basis for a stronger assurance. Scripture does not encourage us to demand more specificity than that.³”

“At this point, in terms of pastoral care with those who have strayed away from their Christian profession, we should realize that *Calvinists* (those who believe in the perseverance of the saints) and *Arminians* (those who think that Christians can lose their salvation) will both counsel a “backslider” in the same way. According to the Arminian, this person was a Christian at one time but is no longer a Christian. According to the Calvinist, such a person never really was a Christian in the first place and is not one now. But in both cases the biblical counsel given would be the same: “You do not appear to be a Christian now—you must repent of your sins and trust in Christ for your salvation!” Though the Calvinist and Arminian would differ on their interpretation of the previous history, they would agree on what should be done in the present.⁴”

“But here we see why the phrase “eternal security” can be misleading. In some evangelical churches, instead of teaching the full and balanced presentation of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, pastors

2 Grudem, W.A. (2020). *SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, SECOND EDITION : an introduction to biblical doctrine*. 2nd ed. S.L.: Zondervan. Page 970.

3 Grudem, W.A. (2020). *SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, SECOND EDITION : an introduction to biblical doctrine*. 2nd ed. S.L.: Zondervan. Page 990.

4 Grudem, W.A. (2020). *SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, SECOND EDITION : an introduction to biblical doctrine*. 2nd ed. S.L.: Zondervan. Page 993

Eternal Security 2026 Romans 8

have sometimes taught a watered-down version, which in effect tells people that all who have once made a profession of faith and been baptized are “eternally secure.” The result is that some people who are not genuinely converted at all may “come forward” at the end of an evangelistic sermon to profess faith in Christ and may be baptized shortly after that, but then they leave the fellowship of the church and live a life no different from the one they lived before they gained this “eternal security.” In this way people are given false assurance and are being cruelly deceived into thinking they are going to heaven when in fact they are not.⁵”

In all this, where is grace? Where is literal interpretation?

Jesus said that faith was the requirement of salvation. You don't have to prove you are saved. If you have to prove you are saved, is there now a list of authorized good works that are required to prove your salvation? Is there a list of evil works that prove you are unsaved? Visible works can be accomplished by an an unbeliever. Can someone who has professed faith in Christ and accomplished many good works and then sins a sin on the forbidden list all of a sudden not be saved? Was the apostle Peter not saved when he disavowed knowledge of Jesus Christ? What about David and his murder of Uriah? What about a tel-evangelist who became a convicted felon? Are we to judge someone's salvation based upon what we see?

In my experience, without an assurance of salvation a person will try to grab hold of good works or avoidance of sin in order to not lose salvation or to prove one's salvation. Where is the spiritual growth?

5 Grudem, W.A. (2020). SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, SECOND EDITION : an introduction to biblical doctrine. 2nd ed. S.L.: Zondervan. Page 993

Eternal Security 2026 Romans 8

The US Treasury Department teaches how to verify good currency. There is some training on what to look for in counterfeit currency, but the stress is how to verify good currency⁶.

So here, I have presented the challenges to “Free Grace” theology. But more important is training on what the Bible teaches about eternal security.

There are many ways to approach a list of Bible passages that support eternal security. I found R. B. Thieme Jr.’s points are easy to follow and remember.

Here is a list of Thieme’s points:

1. Logical Approach: Rom 5; Rom 8:32
2. Positional Approach: Rom 8:1,38-39
3. Anthropomorphic Approach: Ps 37:24; Jn 10:28
4. Experiential Approach: 2Tim 2:12-13
5. Family Approach: Gal 3:26; Jn 1:12
6. Inheritance Approach: 1Pet 1:4-5
7. Power of God: Jude 24-25; 2Pet 2:9
8. Sealing Ministry of the Holy Spirit: Eph 1:13
9. Body Approach: 1Cor 12:21
10. Greek Tense (Perfect) Approach: Eph 2:8-9

We will start with the first point and work our way down the list. The order in the list is not important. I have pulled in explanations from previous lessons with much editing⁷.

⁶ <https://www.uscurrency.gov/educational-materials/training-course>

⁷ <https://www.springvalleybiblechurch.org/Audio/Romans/notes/20240414Romans242.pdf>

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

1. **Logical Approach.** Romans 5; Romans 8:32.

Romans 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

In everyday terms, if I can walk a mile, I can surely walk 100 feet.

The next verses are from Romans chapter 8. That is one of the chapters in the Bible centered on the believer's spiritual life. Just like 1 Corinthians chapter 15 is centered on resurrection, so this chapter is concerned with the believer's spiritual life. It is then instructive to note that eternal security is a basis for living the spiritual life.

Romans 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

This verse is similar to the chapter 5 quote. If God did the most for us at the cross, certainly He can do things that are easier based upon the cross work of Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:33 Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies;

Romans 8:34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

When Satan goes to God and says you committed some terrible sin, it is Jesus who is our defense attorney. He defends us before God the Father. Jesus says, I took care of the eternal penalty of that sin. It is true that we can be disciplined for continually being out of fellowship. The desire is for the believer to return to walking by faith. And that is perhaps what the non-Free Grace people miss. Once we have believed, we are family. As family, God disciplines us.

2. **Positional Approach:** Romans 8:1,38-39

Romans 8:38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,

Romans 8:39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Position in Christ, or “Positional Truth” using Thieme’s terminology, is a vast study in its own right. We have studied this from the perspective of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. As studied, Jesus uses God the Holy Spirit to place us into His body.

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

Adolph Deismann (from his book on Paul⁸).

Deismann's diagrams are beautiful illustrations of Paul's terminology. It would have been even better if he had included one with all that we have "in Christ." That would be a crowded diagram.

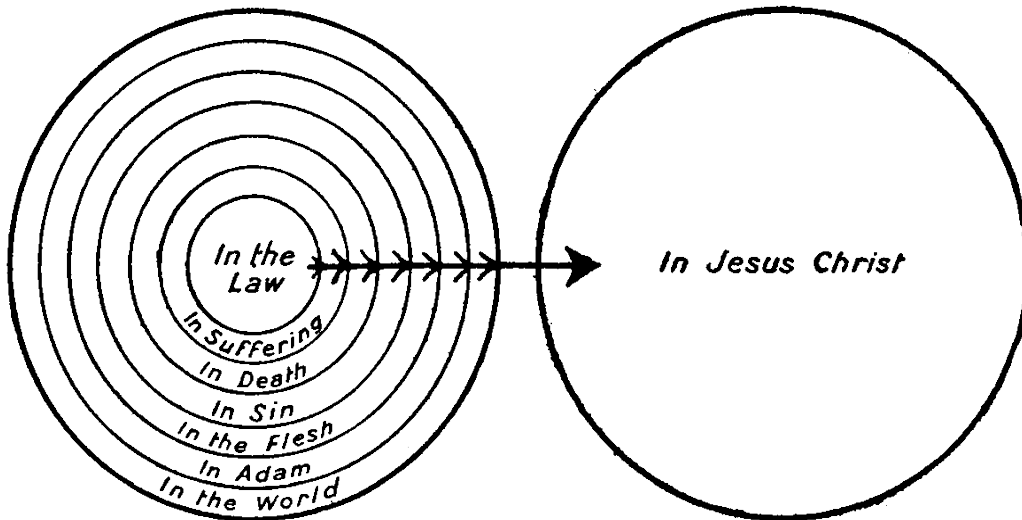


DIAGRAM 4.

The seven spheres of evil apart from salvation in the experience of the 'old' Paul.

DIAGRAM 5.

The one sphere of salvation in the experience of the 'new' Paul.

3. **Anthropomorphic Approach:** Psalm 37:24; John 10:28

John 10:27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;

John 10:28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

Kostenberger (from his commentary on the Gospel of John)

"Jesus' reference to the Father's sovereign power recalls statements in both the OT and Second Temple literature that no one can deliver

8 Adolf Deissmann (1972). Paul. p7

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

out of God’s hand (Isa. 43:13*) and that the souls of the righteous are in his hand (Wis. 3:1).⁹”

*** Isaiah 43:13 “Even from eternity I am He, And there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?”**

4. Experiential Approach: 2 Timothy 2:12-13

The following table is taken from Thomas Constables commentary on 2 Timothy.

Text	Remark
Since we died with Him / We will live with Him	Resurrection (Col 2:20; 3:1,3; Rom 6:2-23)
If we endure / We will reign	There are “degrees” of reigning with Christ. If we endure, we may have greater responsibility in the Millennium kingdom.
If we deny Him / He will deny us (rewards)	There are rewards waiting for us. If we deny Him and avoid walking by faith in the Power of the Holy Spirit, we may lose rewards 1 Cor. 3:12-15; cf. Luke 19:24-26
If we are faithless / He is faithful	Christ remains faithful even if we don’t

“The point of this quotation is that Christians should continue to endure hardship and remain faithful to the Lord, in view of what Jesus Christ has done and will do.¹⁰”

⁹ Köstenberger, A.J. (2004). John (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament). Baker Academic. p312

¹⁰ Thomas Constable commentary on 2 Timothy 2017, p23

5. **Family Approach:** Galatians 3:26; John 1:12

Galatians 3:26 (Wuest Translation) “For all of you are God’s sons through faith, in Christ Jesus”

“...The word translated children is *huios* and is the important word here. This word signifies someone of full age. Under law, the individual was in his minority and under a guardian. Now, under grace, he has attained his majority, having outgrown the surveillance of his former guardian.¹¹”

6. **Inheritance Approach:** 1Pet 1:4-5

1 Peter 1:4 (Wuest Translation) and an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that does not fade away, which inheritance has been laid up and is now kept guarded in safe deposit in heaven for you

1 Peter 1:5 (Wuest Translation) who are constantly being kept guarded by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Wuest.

1Peter 1:4-5: “As begotten children of God, we become His heirs, and joint-heirs with His Son Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:17), and thus come into an inheritance. This inheritance is incorruptible because it belongs to the future life which the risen saints share with God Himself. It is undefiled as our great High Priest is undefiled (Heb.

11 Kenneth Samuel Wuest (1974). Galatians in the Greek New Testament for the English reader. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. page 111

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

7:26 same word). It is non-fading, not able to wither away, as a flower would. The word “reserved” is from *tereo* which means “to watch, to observe, to guard, protect, to reserve, set aside.” Heaven is the safe-deposit box where God is guarding our inheritance for us under constant surveillance. The participle is in the perfect tense, speaking of a past completed action having present results. We could translate, “has been laid up and is now kept guarded in safe deposit.¹²”

7. **Power of God:** Jude 24-25; 2 Peter 2:9

Jude 24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless and with great joy

Jude 25 - to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen

2 Peter 2:9 - then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment

Constable.

"The concluding doxology (vv. 24-25) is universally recognized as one of the fullest and most beautiful in Scripture. Stressing the

¹²Kenneth Samuel Wuest (1973). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament : for the English reader*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans. (Volume II, 1 Peter, page 22)

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

security of the believer in the midst of apostasy, it brings the epistle to a marvelous conclusion.¹³”

8. **Sealing Ministry of the Holy Spirit:** Ephesians 1:13

Ephesians 1:13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

“The Holy Spirit is Himself the seal. In the symbolism of Scripture a seal signifies:

A finished transaction (Jer. 32:9,10; John 17:4)

Ownership (Jer. 32:11, 12; II Tim. 2:19)

Security (Esth. 8:8; Dan. 6:17; Eph. 4:30).¹⁴”

“The Spirit indwelling as an anointing is Himself the Seal. His presence in the Christian indicates a finished transaction, divine ownership, and eternal security.¹⁵”

9. **Body Approach:** 1Corinthians 12:21

1 Corinthians 12:18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.

1 Corinthians 12:19 If they were all one member, where would the body be?

1 Corinthians 12:20 But now there are many members, but one body.

13 <https://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/jude.pdf> (quoting Hiebert)

14 The New Scofield Bible, Oxford University Press, 1967, p1273

15 L.S. Chafer in his “Systematic Theology, Volume 3, Soteriology, p 338

1 Corinthians 12:21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; or again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.”

1 Corinthians 12:22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; [the Greek word for “necessary” also means “essential” and “indispensable.”]

Once we believe in Jesus Christ, we are placed “in Christ,” in His body. Every part of the body is “necessary” or indispensable.

10. **Greek Tense (Perfect) Approach:** Ephesians 2:8-9

Translating from one language to another is not always easy. Many languages have phrases that are embedded in a nation’s culture and the way the people think. If it was simple, there wouldn’t be so many different translations of the Bible.

Ephesians 2:8 (NASB 1995) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

Ephesians 2:9 (NASB 1995) not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2:8 (KJV) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Ephesians 2:9 (KJV) Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

Here is a DTS Greek Scholar (Daniel Wallace) explaining why the KJV might be better than some modern translations: “The KJV translators, though not having nearly as good a grasp on Greek as modern translators, seem to have had a better grasp on English. They apparently recognized that to translate Eph 2:8 with an English perfect would say nothing about the state resulting from the act of being saved.¹⁶”

Ephesians 2:8-10 (Wuest) For by the grace have you been saved in time past completely, through faith, with the result that your salvation persists through the present time; and this (salvation) is not from you as a source. Of God it is the gift; not from a source of works, in order that no one might boast; for we are His handiwork, created in Christ Jesus with a view to good works which God prepared beforehand in order that within their sphere we may order our behavior.

The point is, the perfect tense (in the passive) of the verb “to save” as used in Ephesians 2:8 indicates that believers are saved at the point of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior with the lasting for ever result of being saved. This is eternal security.

There are some attacks on the doctrine of eternal security. From a human perspective, it is “not fair” for a reprobate criminal, perhaps a murderer who is also a Christian to continue to eternal life with God. They certainly are not producing any righteousness. There are at least two

¹⁶ Wallace, D.B. (1996). Greek grammar beyond the basics : an exegetical syntax of the New Testament. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan. Page 575

Eternal Security 2026
Romans 8

problems with this attitude. First, it assumes that humans can produce a righteousness that pleases God. Isaiah 64:6. That is not possible.

Isaiah 64:6a “For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment;...”

This is the passage where I like to translate “filthy garment” as “used toilet paper.” It is not a literal translation but has the desired effect on the current day reader – this is not something I should be giving to God in expectation that He will bless me for it.

Secondly, all sin was judged at the cross. So the issue in salvation is righteousness. But it is God’s righteousness that counts. And that is received (imputation) at the point of salvation as part of being in Christ. We inherit the righteousness of Jesus Christ. It is the gift of God, not of works.