

FOUR REASONS WHY A CHILD OF GOD CAN NEVER BE LOST

By Leonard Sheldrake

I. Because of the Word of God that assures the believer of eternal life.

"They shall never perish" are the unconditional, emphatic words of the Lord Jesus Christ. Are you one of His sheep? Then you shalt never perish; you have eternal life. This is as clear and unmistakable as words could possibly make it. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." John 10:27-29. These words give the fullest confidence to every believing heart. Did He who is "The Truth" say His sheep were in His hand? Did He say "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish"? Yes, blessed be His holy name, He said these very words; and said them to give "everlasting consolation" to His own beloved people. This is enough for my heart; this is rest for my spirit. I know He cannot lie; I know He would not deceive those who take Him at His word; He has said "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." No conviction based on feelings, or the reasonings of men could possibly have the value of the assurance, that is the portion of the soul that has believed the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. Harken again to His emancipating words in John 5:24, "Verily, Verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, HATH everlasting life, and SHALL NOT come into condemnation, but IS PASSED from death unto life." Notice the words "hath" "shall not" and "is passed". These liberating utterances of the Son of God, are a safe anchor to the souls of His people in all the storms of life. To every newborn soul the work of salvation is already complete; the youngest child in the family of God has got "everlasting life"--will never come into condemnation--is already passed "from death unto life." If unbelief makes you hesitate in the presence of these stupendous facts, just open your own Bible and read these very words of the Lord Jesus, till they illuminate your soul with the light and liberty of Heaven. We do not stay to quote other precious portions of the word of God, but pass on to the second reason for the statement that no child of God will ever be lost, which is:--

II. Because of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ for them upon the cross.

Ponder well the following words of the Holy Spirit of God--He is speaking of the finished work of Calvary; "He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained ETERNAL REDEMPTION for us" (Heb. 9:12). This is the precious inheritance purchased for believers by the blood of Jesus. "Eternal redemption" is the blessed portion of every one who has taken shelter under the "precious blood of Christ." If He purchased eternal redemption for me, can any power of earth or hell bring me into bondage to my old master? Nay verily, we have cost Him too much, for Him to let us slip from His grasp. If a man has paid a great price to set a slave free, will he not see to it that the delivered man is secured in that liberty that the ransom has purchased for him? Would it be a matter of little concern to the liberator whether or not the one-time slave was in reality a free man? If a liberator had the power, he would make it absolutely impossible for the old slave master ever to get possession of the one who has been freed with his money. Nothing but lack of being able to deliver, would ever allow the redeemer to abandon the object of his mercy. This is possibly the reason why this epistle to the Hebrews, where we read of "eternal redemption", directs our hearts to the Lord Jesus on the throne of God in Heaven. He has redeemed His people with His own blood, now He lives in the glory to make that redemption good to them. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:25.) This introduces the third reason we have adduced for the eternal security of the believer;--

III. Because of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ for them upon the throne in Heaven.

Not only did the Lord Jesus die for us at Calvary to put away our sins, He lives for us in Heaven to "bring many sons into glory" (Heb. 2:10). He who "loved the church and gave Himself for it" (Eph. 5:25), lives in the glory to "sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word", that He might be able to "present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." (Eph. 5:25-27).

If He was WILLING to pour out His blood to purchase His loved ones, He is also "ABLE to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (Rom. 5:10). If I had a Saviour at Calvary, I have a great High Priest in Heaven. If He bore my sins in His own body on the tree," then I have "an Advocate with the Father" when I fail and sin. Lest this doctrine should be thought to lead to carelessness the Holy Spirit first says "These things write I unto you that ye sin not" (I John 2:1). It is not the sinlessness of the saint that keeps him in the grace of God, but the advocacy of Christ. The Christian has a High Priest to succour, and an Advocate to plead, in the person of the Lord Jesus; he has also a loving Father in the person of God in Heaven to assure his eternal salvation. It is the blood upon the mercy-seat that has secured this blessing for us. The Christian has also the Holy Spirit within him to make him happy in obedience and unhappy in disobedience: as long as we walk obediently He strengthens us with the word of God, but when sin is committed He turns Reprover; the saint loses the joy of salvation and the Father's smile till the sin is confessed and communion restored. During this unhappy period the Lord Jesus is the saint's Advocate, and the blood upon the mercy-seat is his assurance of Propitiation. The Father withdraws the assurances of His love and the special expressions of His approval; or uses the rod till humiliation and confession restores communion again. It is well to apprehend that while obedience in the saint is the source of his joy the unalterable foundation of his salvation is the blood of Christ. That blood upon the mercy-seat has eternally settled every claim of the throne of God for "the redeemed of the Lord". No sin could ever touch the standing of the believer in the favour of God, for this is secured in all the unchanging preciousness of the sacrifice of the Son of God. The Holy Spirit will not allow the Christian to continue unmolested in a path of disobedience where his joy and usefulness are hindered. Our ignorance and sinful wanderings are a constant grief to Him for the Holy Spirit will never be satisfied till Christ is formed in us. But God has perfectly secured the objects of His love in His eternal favour by the cross of Calvary and our Advocate in Heaven. We could not stand for one moment on any other foundation. "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:39).

There remains the fourth reason we have found for the "everlasting salvation" of the believer on the Lord Jesus which is:--

IV. Because of the relationship that God has created between Himself and the saint, and also between the Lord Jesus and His people.

Christians are both "children of God" and "members of the body of Christ". (John 1:12, Eph. 5:30).

The Scripture does not merely say that believers are treated as sons of God; that would surely be wonderful indeed to have the portion of a son of the Creator of all things, even though the relationship did not actually exist; but again and again has the Holy Spirit witnessed to the fact that those who are saved are "born of God", and are "sons". "Beloved, now are we the sons of God" (I John 3:2). "And if children, then heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ". (Rom 8:17). This closest and most self-sacrificing relationship having been created between God and His people, how could they ever get beyond His tender care? A father loves his son because he is his own: the good behaviour of the son is not the cause of the parent's love; neither does bad behavior end it, although ingratitude will probably bring down the rod of chastisement on the back of the disobedient.

Not only are we "sons of God"; every "born again" soul is a member of the body of Christ. "For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph. 5:30). That body is to be presented in the glory perfect, and "not having spot or wrinkle." How absolutely secure must be the standing of those who are sons in the family of God, and members of the body of Christ! Beloved fellow Christian, it is nothing but the darkest and most hateful unbelief that would allow the clouds of doubt to rise in your soul. The blood of Christ, the word of God, and the work of the Spirit make it forever impossible for the least of His redeemed ones to be lost. "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it with an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth in to that within the veil: whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 6:17-20).