

No Fine Line: The Assurance of Eternal Life

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

I John 5:13

“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

II Peter 1:10-11

Introduction:

1. It is not uncommon for God’s elect to question their salvation and worry about eternal judgment to come.
2. Based on the introductory verses above, both John and Peter, among others, were inspired to give assurance.
3. If this sermon is received and studied by faith, there is much hope in the gospel for your personal confidence.
4. First, remember that the Arminian scheme of trusting in your own decision is delusional and doctrinal heresy, for absolutely no one is going to be in heaven on the basis of some momentary decision of accepting Jesus.
 - a. The idea of a mere decision for Jesus determining your eternal destiny is not found anywhere in Scripture.
 - b. Believing and calling are worthless without doing the will of God (Matt 7:21; Luke 6:46; John 8:31-32).
 - c. The assurance taken from a date on your Bible’s flyleaf is entirely a tool of the devil to create vain hope.
 - d. The decision and acceptance that counts in salvation is God’s decision to save and accept you in Christ.
 - e. Get this heresy of the devil entirely out of your mind (John 1:13; Rom 9:15-16; Eph 1:3-6; II Tim 1:9-10).
5. Second, remember that the true gospel of salvation gives God the greatest glory and man the greatest duty.
 1. Only the wise God could resolve the apparent conflict between His sovereignty and man’s responsibility, about which most men simply give up and say the two cannot be reconciled, even with a Bible!
 2. The true doctrine of salvation puts all the will, efforts, works, and cost of eternal life in God and Christ.
 3. The true doctrine of salvation requires the elect to believe and obey faithfully to have full assurance.
 4. Those who say that preaching election is antinomian and destroys any motive to holiness are ignorant.
 5. It is the doctrine of decisional regeneration or baptismal regeneration that removes motives for godliness, for once you have made your decision or been baptized, all is guaranteed and settled without works.
6. Third, remember that the exhortations, promises, and threats in the Bible are either for practical salvation or to evidence eternal life, not to get you to do something that would initiate your regeneration or justification.
 - a. The salvation dependent on Timothy’s personal and ministerial faithfulness is conversion (I Tim 4:16).
 - b. The salvation dependent on believing the gospel and baptism is the evidence of eternal life (Mark 16:16).
 - c. The threat of judgment in many cases is the Lord’s chastening of an elect child, not hell (I Cor 11:27-32).
 - d. Exhortations to grasp eternal life and make election sure are evidences (I Tim 6:12,17-19; II Pet 1:10-11).
7. God was not surprised in Eden at all, and our Lord’s death was not an effort to recover man; the blessed God planned the entrance of sin into the world and had already chosen a covenant people He planned to save.
 - a. Salvation is not God trying to save men if they will cooperate sufficiently with Him in order to get saved.
 - b. The persons were chosen and the names written before the world began. The outcome is not in doubt.
 - c. Eternal life is not something we hope we have done enough to obtain; Jesus Christ gave it freely to us.
8. The Bible was written, especially John’s books, to assure eternal life to readers (I John 5:13; John 20:30-31).
 - a. The Bible was written for those already saved, for it could not do the others any good (Luke 16:31)!
 - b. Consider how the New Testament epistles were written to the saints of churches to provoke their holiness.
 - c. Reading John 3:16 has not, cannot, and will not help any get eternal life; it only instructs the regenerate.
9. Unconverted elect is a Scriptural fact, a soteriological conclusion, and a historical precedent; but the fact is (a) of no value promising anyone eternal life, (b) of no value obtaining assurance of your salvation, and (c) has often been abused to turn the grace of God into lasciviousness.
 - a. Elect dying as infants or idiots have no opportunity or responsibility to do anything to obtain salvation.
 - b. There are numerous cases of elect squandering God’s grace in their lives i.e. Lot, Solomon, Corinth, etc.
 - c. The Bible gives examples of those with eternal life without believing the gospel (Ro 11:28; I Cor 10:1-5).
 - d. It is presumptuous and without necessary evidence to assign eternal life to unbelievers or the disobedient.
 - e. The driving conviction and impetus of the New Testament is calling men to believe and obey the gospel.
 - f. Nowhere does the Bible encourage men that they might have eternal life, even if they disobey the gospel.

Salvation Is No Fine Line

- A. The great God saved a certain number of people infallibly by His own will and power through Jesus Christ to an eternity in heaven with God, leaving others to the just condemnation of their sins and an eternity in hell with the devil and his angels (Matt 1:21; 13:24-43,47-50; John 1:13; 3:8; 6:38; 17:2-3; Rom 5:12-19; 8:29-39; 9:6-24; Eph 1:3-12; 2:1-7; II Tim 1:9-10; 2:19; I Peter 1:2; 2:8; Jude 1:4).
- B. The difference between the righteous and the wicked is enormous (Psalm 5:5; 7:11; Matt 25:31-33; Acts 13:46-48; Rom 9:20-24; II Cor 2:14-17; Heb 2:13; 12:6-8; II Pet 2:9; Rev 20:11-15).
- C. Not a single elect will be lost; not a single reprobate will be saved (Matt 1:21; 13:36-50; 25:31-33; John 6:39; 10:26-29; 17:2; Rom 8:29-39; II Tim 2:19; Heb 2:13; Jude 1:1).
- D. The difference in location and condition of Lazarus and the rich man was no fine line (Lu 16:22-26).
- E. The difference between the sheep and goats, the righteous and the wicked, is great (Matt 25:31-46).
- F. He that spared not His own Son for the elect will provide everything else they need (Romans 8:32).
- G. The coming of Jesus Christ will reveal an enormous difference between men (II Thess 1:7-10).
- H. The coming resurrection will usher some into damnation and others into salvation (John 5:28-29).
- I. When the Book of Life is opened, a drastic difference will be revealed (Rev 20:11-15; Luke 10:20).
- J. There is a significant difference between being saved and being damned (Mark 16:16; John 3:18,36).
- K. There is a great difference between being foreknown with the impossibility of separation and being rejected as entirely unknown and separated forever (Mat 7:23; John 10:14,27-29; Rom 8:29-39).
- L. He is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto Him, but He rejects the rest (Hebrews 7:25).
- M. The only wise God our Saviour will present His elect faultless to God with great joy (Jude 1:24-25).
- N. There is no reason for fatalistic fear that you might not have been included, for your efforts to be included are no different than working hard to get a job, knowing that God has determined that also.
- O. Despair is as stupid as Adam hiding in Eden or the lazy servant burying his talent (Matt 25:24-25).
- P. Fatalistic fear leading to spiritual laziness is rebellious unbelief; it is not a sign of a soul that is extra sensitive about their sins; terrible harlots came to Jesus Christ; Jesus loves losers, and Paul the diligent is the great example (Luke 7:47-48; John 6:37; 8:11; II Cor 5:9; Phil 3:8-14; I Tim 1:12-17).

Evidence Is No Fine Line

- A. Either you think sincerely about God and pleasing Him, or He never enters your mind (Ps 10:4).
- B. Either you understand and seek God or you reject Him and His word like the wicked (Ps 14:1-4).
- C. Either you have spiritual conviction to do right in order to please God or not (Ps 15:1-5; 24:3-6).
- D. Either you understand and seek God or you reject Him and His word like the wicked (Ps 53:1-4).
- E. Either you have the quietness and assurance that flows from righteousness or not (Isaiah 32:17).
- F. Either you have built your house upon a rock or you have built it upon the sand (Matt 7:24-27).
- G. Either you have believed and been baptized sincerely to follow Christ or you have not (Mk 16:16).
- H. Either you care for the things of God's word, or you do not care at all, not ever (Luke 16:27-31)!
- I. Either you can see the kingdom of God, or your eyes are totally closed to Jesus Christ (John 3:3).
- J. Either you have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ and believed it or you have not at all (John 5:24).
- K. Either you follow Jesus Christ for His words of eternal life or because of loaves (John 6:26,66-69).
- L. Either you have been drawn by the power of God to come to Jesus Christ or not (John 6:44-47,65).
- M. Either you have or you have not continued in the words of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 8:30-32).
- N. Either you can hear and understand and obey the words of the gospel, or you do not (Jn 8:43,47).
- O. Either you prove yourself unworthy of eternal life or ordination to it by the gospel (Acts 13:46-48).
- P. Either you have sincerely believed in the Lord Jesus Christ or you have not at all (Acts 16:31).
- Q. Either your life is one based in the lusts of the flesh or it is based in the Spirit of God (Rom 8:1).
- R. Either you have had the testimony of the Spirit as God's sons or you have not (Romans 8:14-17).
- S. Either you consider the preaching of Jesus Christ God's power or stupid foolishness (I Cor 1:18).
- T. Either the gospel is a stumblingblock and foolishness or God's wisdom and power (I Cor 1:22-24).

- U. Either you discern and receive the things of the Spirit or you think them foolish (I Cor 2:14-15).
- V. Either you have confessed Jesus Christ is Lord sincerely and actively or you have not (I Cor 12:3).
- W. Either you respond to the gospel in a way that proves life or that proves death (II Cor 2:14-17).
- X. Either you are Christ's, and thus Abraham's seed, by faith and baptism or not (Gal 3:16,26-29).
- Y. Either you have or have not had the Spirit sent into your heart crying Father (Gal 4:4-6; Eph 1:13).
- Z. Either you bear the fruit of the Spirit or the only product of your life is fleshly lusts (Gal 5:19-25).
- AA. Either you show the mighty power of God quickening faith in your heart or not (Eph 1:15 – 2:5).
- BB. Either you mind earthly things more than Christ or you do not (Philippians 3:18-19; Col 3:1-4).
- CC. Either you have continued in the faith of Christ's gospel or you have moved away (Col 1:21-23).
- DD. Either you have sung to the Lord by grace implanted in your heart or not (Col 3:16; Eph 5:18-19).
- EE. Either you are under strong delusion against the gospel or you believe it mightily (II Thess 2:9-13).
- FF. Either you have faith and are reasonable about the claims of Christ, or you are not (II Thess 3:1-2).
- GG. Either you have or have not financially given to poor saints for the Lord's sake (I Tim 6:17-19).
- HH. Either you have or have not been given repentance and delivered from bondage (II Tim 2:25-26).
- II. Either you love the thought of the soon appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ or not (II Timothy 4:8).
- JJ. Either you have labored in love to help the saints, which He will remember, or not (Hebrews 6:10).
- KK. Either you are vexed by the sins of the wicked or you are quite at peace with them (II Peter 2:7-9).
- LL. Either you keep God's commandments imperfectly, or you do not keep them at all (I John 2:1-6).
- MM. Either you sin as a matter of habit and practice or you fight against sinning as a habit (I Jn 3:1-10).
- NN. Either you love the brethren in deed and truth from a heart alive in God or not (I John 3:11-24).
- OO. Either you hear and obey the apostolic religion of the New Testament or you do not (I John 4:1-6).
- PP. Either you love the brethren through the Spirit to show the character of God or not (I John 4:7-21).
- QQ. Either you are willing and able to overcome trials or you give up (Rev 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21).
- RR. Sin no more proves your reprobation than it did David and Peter's (II Sam 11:27; Matt 26:69-75).
 1. David, whom God loved dearly, did more than commit aggravated adultery and murder; he also cost a man his life by moving the Ark incorrectly, numbered Israel costing 70,000 lives, committed murder in his heart against Nabal, practiced gross polygamy, and was a pitiful father, among other faults (Ps 19:12-13; 25:7; 38:4).
 2. Peter, one of our Lord's favorites, not only denied Him, but played the hypocrite (Gal 2:11-14).
 3. It is a lie of the devil to discourage you that the righteous cannot or do not sin (I Jn 1:8,10; 2:1).
 4. The verses speaking of not sinning must be (a) the new man or (b) the habit of sin (I Jn 3:6-10).
 5. While his example gives no license to sin, Lot shows us a righteous man failing (II Pet 2:7-8).
 6. While his example gives no license to sin, Samson shows us a man of faith failing (Heb 11:32).
 7. While their examples give no right to sin, many at Corinth were killed in sin (I Cor 11:29-32).
 8. God knew the elect would not be perfect, but His covenant stands anyway (Psalm 89:29-37).
- SS. Chastening, so far from proving reprobation, proves God's love for you as His child (He 12:5-17).
 1. Do David's chastenings and Paul's afflictions indicate their reprobation, or their salvation?
 2. When the Lord chastens you, it is because He is NOT going to judge you later (I Cor 11:32).
 3. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but He delivers the righteous (Ps 34:17; Acts 14:22).
- TT. The works of the wicked are not evidence of eternal life, no matter how good they may appear!
 1. A man can only please God by believing He is and He is a Rewarder of seekers (Heb 11:6).
 2. Any actions not based in faith, not based in desire to please God, are sin (Romans 14:23).
 3. Even the plowing of the wicked is sin, no matter how neutral the act may appear (Prov 21:4).
 4. The flesh cannot please God no matter how hard it tries, which it does not try (Romans 8:8).

Confidence Is No Fine Line

- A. Evidence is one thing; confidence is another. Personal confidence in your evidence is what counts!
- B. If the LORD Jehovah is your strength and song, there is no fear, but perfect trust (Is 12:2; 26:3-4).

- C. Paul knew Whom he had believed and was persuaded He could keep Paul's soul here and hereafter, just as we should believe the same thing (II Tim 1:12; I Peter 4:19; Acts 7:59; Luke 23:46; Ps 31:5).
- D. Paul was confident that to be absent from the body was to be present with the Lord (II Cor 5:6-8); but in conjunction with that confidence he labored diligently to be accepted with Him (II Cor 5:9).
- E. If you lose confidence and are upset, put your hope in God instead of feelings (Psalm 42:5,11; 43:5).
- F. Paul knew he had a crown of righteousness waiting for him based on his life (II Tim 4:6-8). Do you?
- G. Job, a long time before Jesus Christ, knew He would be redeemed by His Redeemer (Job 19:25-27).
- H. David had total confidence in God's redeeming grace over his life and body (Psalm 49:14-15).
- I. The apostles were told their names were in the Book of Life, which shows it possible (Luke 10:20).
- J. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved! Believe it ... and call (Rom 10:13)!
- K. Believers can abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost by the God of hope (Rom 15:13).
- L. Examining and proving yourself in the faith is a duty and privilege, and by it you assure yourself that you are not a reprobate (II Cor 13:5). How? By finding the little evidence you are not a reprobate!
- M. The elect have been given the grace for boldness and access with confidence in Christ (Eph 3:8-12).
- N. Paul had fellow laborers with gospel evidence that he knew were in the book of life (Phil 4:3).
- O. The gospel was preached to give comfort and the riches of assurance in God and Christ (Col 2:1-3).
- P. Paul knew the Thessalonians were God's elect, though others were not (I Thess 1:2-4; II Thes 3:1-2).
- Q. Paul told Timothy to lay hold of eternal life by rejecting money and living by faith (I Tim 6:11-12).
- R. Paul told Timothy to tell the rich they could lay up a good foundation against the time to come – the Day of Judgment – and lay hold on eternal life (I Tim 6:17-19). Without thinking you are earning your way to heaven, you should consider each sincere work of charity as a brick in your foundation.
- S. There is full assurance of faith, strong consolation, and hope as an anchor for our souls by (1) things that accompany salvation and (2) through God's immutability and oath to Abraham (Heb 6:9-20).
- T. Good works based in faith in God definitely prove justification and salvation of a man (Jas 2:14-26).
- U. Peter carefully described godly traits added diligently to faith that prove eternal life (II Peter 1:5-16).
- V. You can draw near unto God with full assurance through Jesus Christ's work for you (Heb 10:22).
- W. Your confidence in eternal life will be as great as your faith in God's descriptions and promises.
 1. You believe He created all things from nothing against all the wisdom of this ignorant world!
 2. You believe disciplining your children with a rod will surely work against this ignorant world!
 3. You should believe His totally certain descriptions and promises tied to simple acts of evidence!
- X. It is possible to assure your heart before God that you are definitely His by love (I John 3:14,19-21).
 1. You can know that you have eternal life when you sincerely love and serve the brethren (3:14).
 2. You can assure your heart before God by your compassion and action toward brethren (3:15-19).
 3. The assuring or persuading of our hearts is the same as making our election sure (II Pet 1:10-11).
 4. Even when your heart condemns you as not being God's, He is greater than your heart (3:20).
 5. Rather than trust the feelings of our frail hearts, we trust His absolute promises by strong faith.
 6. God knows you are His by eternal decree and by evidence He described (II Tim 2:19; Heb 6:10).
 7. But the righteous never foolishly presume on love and good works for evidence (Matt 25:31-46).
 8. When Jesus pressed Peter's heart, he took confidence in God's knowledge (John 21:15-19).
 9. If you can ignore your heart, trust Jesus, and believe the evidence, you can be confident (3:21)!
 10. God knows all things: He foreknew and predestinated you from the beginning (Rom 8:29-39).
 11. Since loving others is totally contrary to the natural man, it proves a work of grace (Titus 3:3).
- Y. Boldness in the Day of Judgment is possible by growing in love, as God is love (I Jn 4:7,12,16-18).
 1. After confessing Christ for evidence, it is living in love that counts as supreme evidence (4:16).
 2. There is boldness in the Day of Judgment by loving God and others like God loves; we perfect our love by reaching the goal of loving as He loves, which gives full assurance (4:17,11).
 3. Love being made perfect is love that reaches completion, fulfillment, or perfection; our love is made perfect as we approach His loving ways described for us in the word of God.

4. Complete and perfect love has no fear of God, which depends on a believer learning and trusting God's love for him, his love in return for God, and his love of God's other children (4:18).
5. Learning God's love for us and loving Him in return is the way to perfect your love (4:19).
6. The more you learn about God's love for you, in you, and for others gives confidence of eternal life through the Holy Spirit that bears this fruit in your life (2:28; 3:23-24; 4:16-19; Gal 5:22).

Judgment Is No Fine Line

- A. The devil is very angry that Jesus Christ (a Man) saved you (a human), but will send him to hell!
 1. That such an inferior creature as a man could defeat him and consign him to hell is too much!
 2. Therefore, as he tempted our Lord with Scripture in the wilderness, he tries to discourage you.
 3. He uses verses that with misunderstanding or misapplication to cause you to doubt your Saviour!
 4. These are the fiery darts of the devil that you are to quench with the shield of faith (Eph 6:16).
 5. If the verses that sound as if you could lose your salvation are understood, they do not teach it!
 6. There is not a verse in the Bible that declares or threatens the elect with loss of their eternal life (Ps 89:29-37; Jer 33:17-22; 31:35-37; John 6:39; 17:2; Romans 4:16; 8:29-39; 11:29; etc., etc.).
 7. The word of God was given to comfort God's people (Is 40:1-2; Rom 8:28-39). Reject the devil!
- B. In every "problem text" casting doubt on your assurance, there is a simple process of interpretation.
 1. First, you prove what a verse cannot mean by the testimony of the rest of Scripture (II Pet 1:20).
 2. Second, you use the others rules of Bible study to choose the correct sense from those remaining.
 3. There is no chance that a single elect child of God can be lost, so blow that interpretation away!
 4. Only reprobates, having no fruits of righteousness, go to hell; God's sons are only chastened.
- C. Fiery Dart #1: But what if I have fallen from grace and am no longer under God's mercy (Gal 5:4)?
 1. You are depending too much on what you are doing and forgetting the power of God's grace!
 2. You cannot fall from grace; you can only fall from the true doctrine of grace to Jewish legalism.
 3. The law cannot justify you either; but Paul used absolute terms to describe their false doctrine.
 4. What is the sense of this verse? Those of you who think you are justified by the law have lost the understanding of grace I taught you, and Jesus Christ has no role or value in your new gospel.
- D. Fiery Dart #2: But if the righteous are scarcely saved, I am sure I missed the cut (I Peter 4:17-19)!
 1. The verse does not say the righteous will be lost! The verse says the righteous will be saved!
 2. Read the context! The righteous are scarcely saved in that they have many afflictions and trials.
 3. The judgment beginning at the house of God is not hell, nor death, but persecution and suffering!
 4. It is not even strictly chastening, but rather the perfection of Christian faith through tribulation.
 5. And it creates more reasons for God saving you and condemning them (Phil 1:28; II Thes 1:4-6)!
 6. There is a huge difference here! The righteous suffer a little; the wicked are damned forever!
 7. They are "scarcely saved" in that their lives here are often quite miserable with harsh suffering.
 8. There is no fear of losing salvation here, for a faithful Creator is in the immediate context (v19)!
- E. Fiery Dart #3: But I have fallen away at times from the truth, and I cannot be restored (Heb 6:4-6)?
 1. Remember! Hebrews was written to a unique generation of Jewish converts to Christianity!
 2. Remember! The entire book is dedicated to Christ's superiority and Paul's appeal not to go back!
 3. Remember! Paul used every means possible for the above objective, including the use of threats!
 4. These were truly God's elect and regenerated saints by virtue of what is described of the Hebrews in general and the description in the very context, so the falling away cannot be eternal.
 5. The judgment is not eternal life, because those being considered are God's elect going to heaven.
 6. Therefore, the falling away must be of a practical nature and the judgment must be practical also.
 7. If you create reprobate professors here, then (a) reprobates partake of Christ as do saints, (b) reprobates can fall from salvation, and (c) the passage has no value for them or for the elect!
 8. You cannot be brought back to repentance here, because the text declares that such is impossible!
 9. If you are going to stick eternal life in this passage, then recovery is not possible! Forget heaven!
 10. However, by studying Hebrews, we learn this is a severe warning of those returning to Judaism.

11. These genuine Hebrew saints were tempted to return to the Jews' religion, which would be a grave offence against Jesus Christ, for God had sworn against that generation (Heb 4:1-11; 6:8).
 12. The irremediable judgment was the coming fiery ruin of Jerusalem, which is spoken of throughout the New Testament (Mal 4:5-6; Matt 3:10-12; 12:43-45; 16:27-28; 21:33-46; 22:1-7; 24:34-35; 26:63-64; Luke 12:49; 19:41-44; 23:28-31; Acts 2:40; I Thess 2:16; James 5:1-9; etc.).
 13. The four irremediable warnings in Hebrews are of coming practical judgment on Israel in 70AD, which any Hebrew Christians returning to Jewish worship would fall under; the warnings are not for Gentiles losing eternal life and going to hell (Hebrews 2:1-4; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; 12:25-29)!
 14. The solution for this and the other Hebrew problem texts is neither inventing the possibility of losing your salvation, gymnastics with reprobate believers, or worthless hypothetical arguments.
- F. Fiery Dart #4: But I sinned after knowing the truth, so there is no more mercy (Hebrews 10:26-31)!
1. Remember! Hebrews was written to a unique generation of Jewish Christian converted to Christ!
 2. Remember! The entire book is dedicated to Christ's superiority and Paul's appeal not to go back!
 3. Remember! Paul used every means possible for the above objective, including the use of threats!
 4. These were truly God's elect and regenerated saints by virtue of what is described of the Hebrews in general and the description in the very context, so the falling away cannot be eternal.
 5. The judgment is not eternal life, because those being considered are God's elect going to heaven.
 6. Therefore, the falling away must be of a practical nature and the judgment must be practical also.
 7. If you create reprobate professors here, then (a) reprobates partake of Christ as do saints, (b) reprobates can fall from salvation, and (c) the passage has no value for them or for the elect!
 8. These genuine Hebrew Christians were tempted to return to the Jews' religion, which would be a serious offence against Christ, for God had sworn against that generation (Heb 4:1-11; 10:27).
 9. Look at the context! The issue being considered is holding fast their profession (Heb 10:23-25).
 10. The dreadful day coming was visible, which is not true of the Second Coming (Hebrews 10:25).
 11. If you are going to stick eternal life in this passage, then recovery is not possible! Forget heaven!
 12. The irremediable judgment was the coming fiery ruin of Jerusalem, which is spoken of throughout the New Testament (Mal 4:5-6; Matt 3:10-12; 12:43-45; 16:27-28; 21:33-46; 22:1-7; 24:34-35; 26:63-64; Luke 12:49; 19:41-44; 23:28-31; Acts 2:40; I Thess 2:16; James 5:1-9; etc.).
 13. The four irremediable warnings in Hebrews are of coming practical judgment on Israel in 70AD, which any Hebrew Christians returning to Jewish worship would fall under; the warnings are not for Gentiles losing eternal life and going to hell (Hebrews 2:1-4; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; 12:25-29)!
 14. The solution for this and the other Hebrew problem texts is neither inventing the possibility of losing your salvation, gymnastics with reprobate believers, or worthless hypothetical arguments.
- G. Fiery Dart #5: But I have let the things of the gospel slip, so there is no escape for me (Heb 2:1-4).
1. Remember! Hebrews was written to a unique generation of Jewish Christian converted to Christ!
 2. Remember! The entire book is dedicated to Christ's superiority and Paul's appeal not to go back!
 3. Remember! Paul used every means possible for the above objective, including the use of threats!
 4. These were truly God's elect and regenerated saints by virtue of what is described of the Hebrews in general and the description in the very context, so the falling away cannot be eternal.
 5. The judgment is not eternal life, because those being considered are God's elect going to heaven.
 6. Therefore, the falling away must be of a practical nature and the judgment must be practical also.
 7. If you create reprobate professors here, then (a) reprobates partake of Christ as do saints, (b) reprobates can fall from salvation, and (c) the passage has no value for them or for the elect!
 8. These genuine Hebrew Christians were tempted to return to the Jews' religion, which would be a serious offence against Christ, for God had sworn against that generation (Heb 4:1-11; 10:27).
 9. As in the other Hebrew cases of irremediable warning, the slipping is apostasy back to the Jews.
 10. If you are going to stick eternal life in this passage, then recovery is not possible! Forget heaven!
 11. Look at the context! Paul includes himself in the warning, so either he is warning the reprobate nation at large as a Jew, or he is warning fellow Jewish believers in his condition (Heb 3:1; 4:3).

12. The irremediable judgment was the coming fiery ruin of Jerusalem, which is spoken of throughout the New Testament (Mal 4:5-6; Matt 3:10-12; 12:43-45; 16:27-28; 21:33-46; 22:1-7; 24:34-35; 26:63-64; Luke 12:49; 19:41-44; 23:28-31; Acts 2:40; I Thess 2:16; James 5:1-9; etc.).
 13. The four irremediable warnings in Hebrews are of coming practical judgment on Israel in 70AD, which any Hebrew Christians returning to Jewish worship would fall under; the warnings are not for Gentiles losing eternal life and going to hell (Hebrews 2:1-4; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; 12:25-29)!
 14. The solution for this and the other Hebrew problem texts is neither inventing the possibility of losing your salvation, gymnastics with reprobate believers, or worthless hypothetical arguments.
- H. Fiery Dart #6: But I disobeyed God's voice from heaven, and now I am doomed (Heb 12:25-29).
1. Remember! Hebrews was written to a unique generation of Jewish Christian converted to Christ!
 2. Remember! The entire book is dedicated to Christ's superiority and Paul's appeal not to go back!
 3. Remember! Paul used every means possible for the above objective, including the use of threats!
 4. These were truly God's elect and regenerated saints by virtue of what is described of the Hebrews in general and the description in the very context, so the falling away cannot be eternal.
 5. The judgment is not eternal life, because those being considered are God's elect going to heaven.
 6. Therefore, the falling away must be of a practical nature and the judgment must be practical also.
 7. If you create reprobate professors here, then (a) reprobates partake of Christ as do saints, (b) reprobates can fall from salvation, and (c) the passage has no value for them or for the elect!
 8. These genuine Hebrew Christians were tempted to return to the Jews' religion, which would be a serious offence against Christ, for God had sworn against that generation (Heb 4:1-11; 10:27).
 9. The refusal here is unique to those Jews refusing Christ and returned to His enemies the Jews.
 10. The shaking under view here had already occurred in discarding the trash of the Jewish system.
 11. The consuming fire of God was about to destroy those Jews, the priesthood, the temple, etc.
 12. The irremediable judgment was the coming fiery ruin of Jerusalem, which is spoken of throughout the New Testament (Mal 4:5-6; Matt 3:10-12; 12:43-45; 16:27-28; 21:33-46; 22:1-7; 24:34-35; 26:63-64; Luke 12:49; 19:41-44; 23:28-31; Acts 2:40; I Thess 2:16; James 5:1-9; etc.).
 13. The four irremediable warnings in Hebrews are of coming practical judgment on Israel in 70AD, which any Hebrew Christians returning to Jewish worship would fall under; the warnings are not for Gentiles losing eternal life and going to hell (Hebrews 2:1-4; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; 12:25-29)!
 14. The solution for this and the other Hebrew problem texts is neither inventing the possibility of losing your salvation, gymnastics with reprobate believers, or worthless hypothetical arguments.
- I. Fiery Dart #7: But I have partaken of the Lord's Supper unworthily, so I am under damnation and guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, and damnation most surely means hell (I Cor 11:27-29).
1. It is indeed a terrible and wicked sin to partake of the Lord's Supper without confession of sin or without rightly viewing Jesus Christ, for you have disgraced the Lord's body and blood (11:27).
 2. But the damnation here is practical judgment of weakness, sickness, and an early death (11:30).
 3. And the physical judgment of 11:30 is the Fatherly chastening of 11:32 as the evidence of NOT being damned with the wicked in the Day of Judgment! The text proves salvation!
- J. Fiery Dart #8: But I cannot stop sinning, so it proves I am not God's child (I John 3:4-10; 5:18).
1. The first rule of study is to prove what a verse cannot mean, which was stated (I John 1:8,10).
 2. Sinning is not our way of life; and when we sin, we are to confess it quickly (I John 1:9; 2:1).
 3. The text says no murderer hath eternal life, yet there is David and us (I John 3:15; Matt 5:21-22).
 4. The Lord already knows you are going to sin and provided a guarantee anyway (Ps 89:28-37)!
 5. The evidence of eternal life is striving toward righteousness and avoiding the sinful and unrepentant lifestyle of the wicked, which have neither ambitions of holiness nor hatred for sin.
 6. Since we are the children of God, our lives should resemble the God Who saved us, and they should reflect what He saved us from (I John 3:5 cp Matt 5:43-48 cp Romans 8:1,4).
 7. If we grasp God's love in our adoption, we will live pure lives (I John 3:1-3; II Cor 5:14-17).

8. The seed in a believer is the new man that keeps him from living comfortably and perpetually in sin (I Jn 3:9); it is not merely the new man that does not sin, but the elect man with a new man; for John did not jump to some legal or vital consideration of the elect; he is dealing practically.
 9. Lot's new man caused him to be vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked in Sodom.
 10. If you take these verses absolutely, will you condemn Noah, Lot, David, Solomon, Peter, etc.?
 11. There is no doctrine here of sinless perfection or anything close to it; relax, and live righteously!
- K. Fiery Dart #9: But the Lord may tell me to depart from Him after calling on Him (Matt 7:21-23)!
1. I have been guilty of hypocrisy in my life at times, and I just know that I deserve that sentence!
 2. The wicked that Jesus will reject are self-righteous, self-justifying Pharisees that work iniquity and only have confidence in the flesh (Matt 7:21-23 cp Luke 18:9-14; 16:13-18 cp Phil 3:3-4).
 3. There is not a single humble sinner in the group that will be trusting Jesus Christ for salvation; they instead will be presuming on God and Jesus Christ by the arrogance of self-righteousness.
 4. These pompous, self-righteous, self-confident reprobates do all that is wrong in Christ's sermon.
 5. Jesus did not give these verses to scare the righteous, but to say what He would do to the ravenous false prophets that he had just warned the righteous about (Matthew 7:19 cp 7:21-23).
- L. Fiery Dart #10: But I may have committed blasphemy, the unpardonable sin (Matthew 12:31-32)!
1. Here is a sin for which there is no forgiveness but only danger of eternal judgment (Mark 3:29).
 2. Take comfort all kinds of blasphemy can be forgiven, as with Paul (Mark 3:28; I Tim 1:12-17).
 3. Were any elect guilty of this sin? Not a chance, for then how would they all be saved without the loss of one? And how could they be so depraved anyway unless hardened as Pharaoh in malice?
 4. What is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost? It is being an eyewitness to the miracles of Jesus Christ, and likely knowing the power of God was present, but charging Jesus Christ with working through the power of the devil rather than through the Holy Ghost of God (Mark 3:30).
 5. Blaspheming or reproaching Jesus for His humble birth, origin in Nazareth, mean company, and other things could be forgiven and was forgiven; but the Pharisees were far more depraved.
 6. The profanity of accusing Jesus of Nazareth of casting out devils by the power of the devil was an aggravated form of hatred and malice toward the great God, by Whom our Lord performed His miracles, that earned these depraved reprobates this warning of coming judgment.
 7. They had not just missed identifying the Son of God due to the mystery of His incarnation; they had cursed the holy God of heaven in the vilest of terms, though witnessing the most gracious, holy, merciful, and righteous acts by a righteous Man in casting devils out of a possessed man.
 8. Can anyone today be guilty of the sin? No, because they cannot be eyewitnesses to Jesus Christ and be in the presence of the visible and demonstrable power of God in casting out devils.
 9. Again, look at the context! Jesus used this form of language to condemn His detractors to eternal hell without any possibility of recovery (Matt 23:33)!
- M. Fiery Dart #11: But I may be a tare the devil has sown among the saints (Matthew 13:24-30,36-43)!
1. If you fear you are a tare, then repent and run to Jesus for safety! No tares ever do this, not ever!
 2. If you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and are truly seeking righteousness, you cannot be a tare!
 3. The tares are children of the devil, which have no righteousness at all and love sin, which hate the Lord Jesus Christ and His people (Eph 2:1-3; John 8:44; I John 3:8-10).
 4. Wicked men will get into the church; but even Christ's ministers can generally spot them; and the angels certainly can. They have the fruits described in the rest of this outline as dead rebels.
 5. Do not fear by this description of the kingdom. No wheat will be lost; no tares will be saved; there is no fine line here at all. The righteous will be saved, and the wicked will be rejected.
 6. Ministers know the tares; angels know the tares; and God knows the tares; it is carnal wheat that poses the danger, for the ministers with imperfect knowledge might mistake them for tares.
 7. The danger of weeding out the tares early was due to the similarity at times that carnal and weak Christians have to them; the tares will all be damned; but even carnal wheat will be saved!

8. There are similarities at times between carnal Christians and reprobates, but there is never real confusion between spiritual Christians and reprobates (II Peter 1:9; Matt 13:18-22; II Pet 2:7-9).
 9. The fear is not tares looking like wheat (the ministers could see and remove the tares), but rather foolish and carnal Christians looking like tares; therefore, give diligence to your evidence!
 10. There is a message of mercy in the parable toward the wheat, not a threat of being condemned!
- N. Fiery Dart #12: But I may not be in the book of life, so I will go to the second death (Rev 20:11-15).
1. The second death has no power over those in the first resurrection (Rev 20:6), so prove your new birth by those works that evidence regeneration (John 5:24-25; I John 2:29; 4:7; 5:1; Rev 2:11).
 2. You can know whether your name is in the book of life, as Paul knew of his friends (Phil 4:3).
 3. These verses were not given to scare you as a believer, but to prophesy the end of your enemies; for the preceding context is the gathering of the devil and reprobates against the saints!
 4. Consider that the first resurrection and safety from the second death is mentioned first (20:6).
 5. Consider then that the devil and his minions attack the saints before the description of judgment.
- O. Fiery Dart #13: But my name is surely blotted out of the Book of Life after it was written (Rev 3:5).
1. No one is blotted out of the book of life, or God and Christ failed! Get this point down solidly (Ps 89:29-37; Jer 33:17-22; 31:35-37; John 6:39; 17:2; Romans 4:16; 8:29-39; 11:29; etc., etc.)!
 2. The first rule of Bible study is to prove what a verse cannot possibly mean before attempting to determine its positive meaning from the few remaining alternatives (II Peter 1:20; Proverbs 8:8).
 3. The verse does not say that any are blotted out; in fact, it says just the opposite of such a thing!
 4. Jesus comforted Sardis that he would not change His will like so many earthly benefactors do!
 5. Rather than reading the verse as a threat, read it as an encouraging promise, which is what it was!
 6. Those losing their part in the book of life for corrupting Scripture never had any true part in it; they rather falsely presumed on the grace of God for themselves (Rev 22:19; Luke 8:18; Is 66:5)!
 7. The Lord's answer to Moses in Exodus 32:32 was either a hyperbolic or sarcastic response to his statement (cp Gen 3:22) or a reference to blotting them out from among the living (Num 11:15).
 8. The persecutors of Jesus Christ have no hope of eternal life (Ps 69:28), though they supposed themselves to be the most certain sons of Abraham and of God (John 8:38-59).
- P. Fiery Dart #14: But I likely sinned unto death, which should not be prayed for (I John 5:16-17).
1. There are two sins to death in the New Testament – blasphemy against the Holy Ghost for eternal death for reprobates and apostasy of believing Jews back to Jerusalem for practical death.
 2. Observe that the situation was prayer for a brother, and the death must be more than fellowship, for we should labor and pray for any brother in ordinary sin or sins (Gal 6:1-2; Jas 5:16,19-20).
 3. John was an apostle to the Jews; so he, like Paul, was writing Hebrew Christians (Galatians 2:9).
 4. The sin that should not be prayed for was total apostasy of converted Jews back to Judaism.
 5. Since there was a curse against that generation, such prayers would not be heard (Heb 4:1-11).
 6. Paul held no hope of recovery for these same apostates (Heb 2:1-4; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; 12:25-29).
 7. It is impossible for you to sin this sin, and this sin did not result in eternal death even for them.
- Q. Fiery Dart #15: But I returned to my vomit, so the blackness of hell is for me (II Peter 2:17-22)!
1. You are missing the clear distinction of two groups – the false teachers and their victims: there is a “they” that promises others (“them”) liberty; “they” go to hell; “them” are chastened (2:19).
 2. If you back up to the previous verse, “they” are seducing and “those” are fully saved (2:18).
 3. If you back up to the previous verses, it is the false teachers that are reserved for hell (2:12-17).
 4. False teachers can overthrow the faith of weak believers, but they cannot take away eternal life (Luke 11:52; I Cor 15:12; Gal 3:1; 5:7-12; I Tim 4:16; II Tim 2:16-18; II Tim 2:19; II Pet 2:1-2)!
 5. If after having cleanly escaped the world through the gospel (2:18) and escaping the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of Christ (2:20), you return to worldly living, your end will be worse than your beginning. God will chasten your foolishness, but you are not lost eternally.
 6. The more knowledge you receive by the gospel makes your chastening worse (Luke 12:47-48).

Conclusion:

- A. There is no fine in the issue of eternal life and assurance of it. God has made a great difference in salvation; the evidence in a child of God is very great; the difference in personal confidence is very great; and there is a huge difference in the way in which the elect and nonelect are judged. There is no fine line in eternal life!
- B. Either you are or you are not willing to humbly and sincerely call on Jesus Christ for salvation and follow it up by keeping His commandments, and this proves eternal life, not initiates it (Mark 16:16; Luke 23:39-43).
- C. There is not a verse in the Bible that declares or threatens the elect with loss of their eternal life (Ps 89:29-37; Jer 33:17-22; 31:35-37; John 6:39; 17:2; Romans 4:16; 8:29-39; 11:29; etc., etc.).
- D. The gospel is to comfort you with assurance of eternal life (Is 40:1-2; Rom 8:28-39; Heb 6:9-20; I John 5:13).
- E. God bestowed His love on us for eternity, with the gift of knowing about it to remove all fear (I Jn 4:16-19).
- F. Through the Holy Spirit, you are able to learn love to the full assurance of eternal life (I Jn 2:28; 3:19; 4:18).

For Further Study:

1. The study outline, "[Seven Proofs of Unconditional Salvation](#)," proves that salvation does not include human cooperation.
2. The study outline, "[When Were You Saved?](#)" shows the five phases of salvation and how conversion proves eternal life.
3. The sermon outline, "[When Was Cornelius Saved?](#)" proves that God saved Cornelius long before meeting Peter.
4. The sermon outline, "[I Thessalonians 1:4-10](#)," shows how Paul could easily conclude that the Thessalonians were elect.'
5. The sermon outline, "[Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ](#)," opens Acts 16:31 as an evidence of eternal life, not a condition.
6. The sermon outline, "[Jesus Loves Losers](#)," is for those grieving over past sins and wondering if Jesus would save them.
7. The sermon outline, "[Fruit of the Spirit](#)," explains Galatians 5:22-23 as the true and only evidence of the Holy Spirit.
8. The sermon outline, "[Salvation By Works](#)," shows the folly of decisional salvation by numerous calls to works instead.
9. The commentary, "[Proverbs 21:4](#)," shows that the wicked sin in every act, even those things we would consider neutral.
10. The sermon outline, "[The Book of Life](#)," shows how your name got in it, how you can know it, and the benefits it brings.
11. The sermon outline, "[Why Preach the Gospel?](#)" explains the gospel is preached for regenerate elect, not to make elect.
12. The sermon outline, "[Why No Invitation?](#)" proves the invitation is a recent invention and has no meaning for salvation.
13. The sermon outline, "[John 3:16 Revisited](#)," shows that this verse is no wider than the elect as proven by John himself.
14. The sermon outline, "[Pressing Saints or Belly Worshipers](#)," opens Philippians 3:8-21 and exhorts to holy living.