

Study No. 3

Assurance

Remember to fill in the Bible references.

This study is about a personal assurance of salvation. It is about the certainty of forgiveness in Christ and the sure knowledge that we shall enter Heaven, not Hell, when we die.

Some people doubt their salvation because they start off with mistaken ideas of what life as a Christian will be like. For example, you may imagine (wrongly) that if God has saved you, you will not sin any more - or that nothing unpleasant will ever happen to you with God on your side. Such ideas quickly lead to disappointment! However, this is not because God has rejected you, but simply because you have had false expectations to begin with. That is why our first study was so important: it is vital to be clear about what the Christian message really is,

1. IF WE ARE SAVED, GOD WANTS US TO KNOW IT

God does not want us to be forever anxious about our salvation. He wants us to be certain of it, and so be able to rejoice in it, knowing that God is with us in life and in death.

(a) God wants us not only to be saved, but to know that we are saved: **look up 1 John 5:13**

(b) **And Luke 12:32**

2. HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT I AM REALLY SAVED?

This question could be put another way: "How can I be sure I am one of those God has chosen?" (See previous study.) Such questions may be asked when a Christian has a less spectacular "experience" than expected, or if early "feelings" have now become less intense. However, it is wrong to assume that being saved will "feel" like anything



in particular - our feelings may vary widely. They often have more to do with the condition of our body than the condition of our soul. Your salvation depends on facts, not feelings. Facts are the only safe grounds for our salvation.

(a) **Fact No.1:** Christ was punished for sin 2,000 years ago.

In a nutshell, we can be sure about our salvation because of what God has done in His Son, Jesus Christ. If salvation depended on our goodness we would be uncertain about it. But because it depends on what God did, we can be absolutely certain of our salvation.

Read for yourself what God has done to save you. He gave His Son, Jesus, to die for us:

look up John 3:16

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And Romans 5:8

(b) **Fact No.2:** God has promised salvation to those who repent and believe.

If we have turned to God in repentance and trust Christ's death alone for our salvation, then the I following promises are made to us. But before we look at these promises, remember that God cannot lie: **look up Titus 1:2**

Remember too, that to doubt anything God says is to call Him a liar: **look up 1 John 1:10**

Now **look up John 5:24**

And 1 Thessalonians 5:9

Also **Romans 8:1**

Lastly, **1 John 1:9**

3. HOW CAN I BE SURE MY REPENTANCE AND FAITH IS GENUINE?



Although our salvation was achieved by Christ's death in our place, it is received by faith. Faith is the hand that takes the gift of eternal life, and repentance is the natural response of a heart that wants to please God. But how can we be sure that our repentance and faith are real? We know their reality by the way our lives are changed by them. (a) The fruit of repentance and faith is a life of love and obedience to God. Concerning the fruit of repentance **look up Matthew 3:8 (compare Matthew 7:17)**

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(b) Faith, like repentance, is also seen by works that please God: **look up James 2:18**

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When we notice these changes in our lives we know that God has been actively at work within us, and this assures us of our salvation. We will not reach the standard we want to, but if we are walking with Christ we shall see an improvement.

(c) Another great proof of our salvation is our love for fellow believers. We have a growing love for other Christians, simply because they are Christians: **look up 1 John 3:14**

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REVIEW

God wants you to know you are His child and also to enjoy your salvation. God's promises are clear and sufficient, and they are not altered by our feelings! Our assurance of salvation comes largely from trusting what God has done and believing what God has said. The question is not "How strong are my feelings?" or even "How great is my faith?", but rather "How true is God to His promises?". When we say "I know I'm forgiven" we are simply saying that we believe God. This is a far cry from presumptuous boasting. Indeed, it is the height of presumption to argue with God when He tells us we are forgiven!