

The Assurance of Grace and Salvation

“This is my story, this is my song ... Heir of salvation, purchase of God, Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.” ... It is not simply a hymn we know and love, - it is a warm truth we hold close to our hearts ... the knowledge of saving grace through the Lord Jesus Christ.

However, each of us at some time or another has doubted the validity of our faith. “Has God truly and really saved me? Should I be thinking thoughts like this anymore? Do I have full *assurance* that if I was to die this very moment I would be in Glory with the Saviour?”

These are deep and important matters. Too many people have left it too late to answer them truthfully and are today burning in Hell. The doctrine of assurance of grace and salvation in Christ is so critical!

First of all though, we need to make a distinction ...

THE FUTILITY OF FALSE DOCTRINE

- * Nowadays it's not proper to call anything false, - it's not politically correct; nevertheless, the Bible speaks clearly about false doctrines.
- * ... They are to be avoided, and confronted. Paul refers to them as *doctrines of men* (Col. 2:22) and as *doctrines of devils* (I Tim. 4:1). He taught clearly that false doctrine must not be entertained by true believers, e.g. Rom. 16:17 *I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*
- * It is a fact that many claim to be converted to Christ but very soon afterwards they 'go back' and they are like the people Paul mentions in Eph. 4:14, *tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness.*
- * Our *Confession* makes reference to these “temporary believers and other unregenerate persons” ... “deceived by erroneous, self-engendered notions into thinking that they are in God's favour and in a state of salvation”.
- * They are 'temporary' simply because their salvation is not eternal. Their salvation depends upon whether or not they can keep it ... and the poor creatures don't realise that *salvation is all of God!*
- * It is a sad case when you are speaking with someone and trying to explain to them your faith ... that faith is not a religion, but faith is a relationship. They can't understand what you mean.
- * It is sad when they can't see past their church. It is about what a 'saint' said or some high-ranking cleric, or it is what Mohammed taught, or Joseph Smith, or C.T. Russell or some other deceiver.

- * It *is* indeed sad when people trust for their eternity in doctrines of men and in doctrines of devils.
- * You see, the common ground upon which all false doctrine is founded is the belief that mankind can discover their own way of salvation and are therefore not 'dead' or so gravely fallen in sin, as the Bible teaches.
- * That is how if you ask someone, - of whatever religion, - if they are sure of a place in Heaven they can only answer that they *hope* everything will be fine. ... They cannot be sure, because their religious system does not offer them any assurance.
- * It tremendously saddens me when someone is so sincere and yet their eyes are so blinded that they cannot see the wonderful Truth of God's Gospel ... that Jesus Christ came and died on the cross of Calvary and rose again and has won the victory which lasts for eternity for all those who believe.
- * **The futility of false doctrine**, - many of our loved ones are bound up in it. Keep on praying for them ... that God would open their eyes and that they would be saved. ... But from futility we go to ...

OUR FONDNESS FOR THIS DOCTRINE

- * Paul put it very succinctly, very personally and very simply when he wrote, [Phil. 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.](#)
- * You see, this doctrine doesn't depend on man's ability to keep a religion, it depends instead upon a deep and genuine assurance that when Jesus Christ died on the cross, He died there for me.
- * It's not merely a doctrine that slips from the mind of a theologian but it is a doctrine that burns within the believing child of God. It's a doctrine that teaches me from within my heart and assures me that God loved me so much He sent His Son to die for me.
- * Nobody can argue me out of it; I *know* it, and like Paul I can say with full assurance in my heart, [II Tim. 1:12 I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.](#)
- * I'm not boasting in Calvin or the Reformers, or even in Paul and the apostles ... but when God has done so much as to save your soul for eternity *you boast alone in Him.*
- * I don't need to argue the point ... or even get anyone round to my way of thinking; I simply know, - on the grounds of what the Bible teaches and how the Holy Spirit impresses upon my heart, - that I am a child of God.

- * You cannot buy that knowledge of assurance, you cannot earn it ... all you need to do is believe it. It's not self-illusion (where I tell myself and I somehow make myself believe it), but the Word of God simply says that if I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ I shall be saved (Acts 16:31).
- * On the last Sunday of this month the Lord will have saved me thirty-six years ago. He put His mark on me ... a mark that seals me and sets me apart as His.
- * And the more I read about it in His Word the more I see my salvation is all of Him. "He called me long before I heard, before my sinful heart was stirred".
- * He didn't 'nudge me' or have to set before me the benefits of being saved and it was down to me to let Him know what I was going to do about it ... No, "He drew me and I followed on".
- * Oh, I love this doctrine of the assurance of grace and my salvation ... for I know it is all of God, - He planned it, He worked out my circumstances, He effectually drew me, He brought me to Himself, and He is holding on to me ... and He will never let go.
- * I have confidence in this salvation because it is nothing of me, or of this world, for it is all of God. I am His and He is mine; ... and it is not a *distant doctrine* ... but a *treasured truth*.
- * The futility of false doctrine, our fondness for *this* doctrine ... There is also something else here the *Confession* sets before us, "The infallible assurance of salvation is not an essential part of salvation, for a true believer may wait for a long time, and struggle with many difficulties, before he attains to it". ... It is telling us about ...

OUR FAILINGS IN THE LIGHT OF THIS DOCTRINE

- * Someone has said, that "Assurance is the enjoyment of our salvation". ... But we all remember those occasions, - especially when we were young Christians, - when we truly wondered whether we were saved or not. Doubt was a-plenty!
- * I was brought up in a false doctrine that taught me I had to "keep" my salvation because if I didn't I would be lost. The continuation of my salvation depended on me being able *not* to sin. - One sin and that was me back to the start!
- * And sometimes I wondered if I was saved at all ... I found myself getting into a habit of praying, "Forgive me my sin, Lord". It was a habit more than a prayer.

- * I'm glad the Lord opened my eyes to the fact the Bible teaches that it is not me that keeps my salvation ... but *it is God that keeps me*.
- * If it depended on me I would have lost it at the beginning! If it all depended on how I dressed, how long my hair was ... and a whole list of do's and don'ts ... I would have been '*not saved*' many times!
- * My salvation is God's business; when He made His mark on me He made it for keeps! It will *never* be erased, - *it cannot* (He promised!). Even when I wondered if was I still saved, - I remained His.
- * Even when I backslid He kept me ... when many another one would not have given me a second opportunity.
- * ... And yes, I backslid but I can say, - to God's glory, - He never let go. I didn't deserve for Him to keep on loving me ... but He did, and He restored me.
- * I'm still a child of God today, only because of God's eternal mercy and grace and it is in His grace that I have the **assurance** I'm saved.
- * Being a Minister, having studied the Bible, trying to do the best I can? ... *none* of it proves I'm saved ... but I know inside, - and on the basis of what the Bible says, - that I'm saved.
- * When the devil made me doubt it, I used to listen to him ... but I know now what Spurgeon meant, "Faith saves us, but assurance satisfies us". Or, as Samuel Wesley told his son, "The inward witness, son, the inward witness; that is proof, the strongest proof of Christianity". [Rom. 8:16 The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.](#)

Conclusion. The devil will try to convince you that you are not special to God ... but you are, - His Son died on a cross in your place, - that was *His* plan. He thought it up and He worked it out!

- * We are not trusting in ourselves and our own abilities, - we're trusting in the God Who made all things and sustains all things.
- * He tells us in His Word that He has [saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, \(II Tim. 1:9\).](#)
- * The doctrine of the **Assurance of grace and salvation**, - what a beautiful doctrine that we hold on to; and in that doctrine, - be confident in and assured of this, - [Phil. 1:6 that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.](#)