

“Blessed Assurance”

INTRODUCTION

- A. Charles Spurgeon is quoted as saying that he was so sure of his salvation that he would be willing to swing on a com stalk over the fires of hell, look into Satan’s face, and sing, “Blessed assurance; Jesus is mine!”
 - 1. Although I don’t want to judge Spurgeon, from what we know historically, Spurgeon was mistaken in his assurance.
 - 2. Yet, those of us who are Christians should have that assurance — to be able to look Satan in the face and say, “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!”
- B. What about you? If Jesus were to come right now, would you know for sure, nothing doubting, that you would go to heaven?
 - 1. Many would say, “Yes,” yet have a false hope.
 - a. So many who are religious believe they are going to heaven just because they are religious or belong to some church.
 - b. Saul of Tarsus was religious and believed he was doing what God wanted., yet before he was baptized by Ananias he was as lost as lost could be.
 - c. On the last day, Jesus will tell those who were religious to depart from him (Mt. 7:22-23).
 - 2. Many would say, “I hope so.” They want to go to heaven, but they don’t have any certainty.
 - 3. Many would say, “No.”
- C. Why are so many unsure of their salvation?
 - 1. Many want this wonderful feeling in their gut.
 - a. We need to base our religion on what we know, not on what we feel; the Bible, not our feelings, needs to be our guide.
 - b. Our feelings are fickle — they can change in an instant. Yet, God’s Word never changes.
 - 2. Many are trying to earn their own salvation.
 - a. Salvation is “not of works” (Eph. 2:8-9).
 - 1) There isn’t anything we can do to earn salvation. We deserve to be lost, and it’s only through God’s goodness that we can be saved.
 - 2) We cannot be good enough to earn our salvation.
 - b. Salvation is based upon what God has done, not on how good we are (Tit. 3:4-5).
- D. We can know we have eternal life.
 - 1. The Scriptures affirm such.
 - a. “There things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 Jn. 5:13).
 - b. “There is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing” (2 Tim. 4:8).
 - c. “To me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21).
 - d. “We know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Cor. 5:1).
 - 2. How can we know that we have eternal life?

WE KNOW IF WE ARE IN CHRIST

- A. God has promised to forgive those who are baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38-39).
 - 1. We know that God keeps his promises; God cannot lie (Tit. 1:2).
 - 2. Illustration about saying that God would be the bigger loser if she went to hell, Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations, #11049.
- B. If we are in Christ, we have forgiveness.
 - 1. Those in Christ have forgiveness — “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins” (Eph. 1:7).
 - 2. We know how to get into Christ.
 - a. “Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?” (Rom. 6:3).
 - b. “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27).
 - 3. The only way to get into Christ is to be baptized into Christ.
- C. Are you in Christ?

WE KNOW IF WE ARE WALKING IN THE LIGHT

- A. If we walk in the light, the blood of Jesus forgives us of all sin (1 Jn. 1:7).
 - 1. In order to have this promise, we must walk in the light.
 - a. This is a conditional promise, i.e., a promise that is conditional upon prerequisites.
 - 1) God does not forgive everyone.
 - 2) We cannot walk in the darkness and expect God to forgive.
 - a) There were groups in the first century that said that regardless of how you lived God would forgive you.
 - b) John wrote this and said, “Wait a minute! You’ve got to be doing what’s right to have forgiveness.”
 - b. “Walking in the light” means we strive to be like God.
 - 1) God is light (1 Jn. 1:5).
 - 2) If we are to have fellowship with God, we ourselves must be in the light.
 - c. This doesn’t mean that we must be perfect to have God’s forgiveness, but it does mean we need to be doing our best to do God’s will.
 - 2. If we walk in the light, we have forgiveness of all sin.
 - a. There isn’t a single sin that God cannot forgive if you are walking in the light.
 - b. Illustration about Dr. Joseph Cook asking the leaders of world religions about the woman with blood-stained hands, Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations, #936.
- B. Are you walking in the light?

WE KNOW IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS

- A. If we confess our sins, God will forgive (1 Jn. 1:9).
 - 1. God is faithful and just to forgive our sins.
 - 2. God has promised to forgive those who confess sins, and he really will — Since God is faithful, we can trust his promises.
- B. “Confess” means to “say the same thing.”
 - 1. Confession pictures a dialogue between man and God.
 - 2. We agree with God that we are sinners and that what we have done is wrong and sinful.
- C. When we come before God, we need to confess the sins we have committed.
 - 1. We live in a society where we don’t take blame for anything.
 - a. If someone is a child molester, he says, “I was molested as a child.”
 - b. If someone is an alcoholic, he says, “I have a genetic disposition to alcohol.”
 - c. When God asked Adam why he had eaten of the forbidden fruit, Adam said, “God, it’s the woman you gave me.” When God asked Eve why she ate of the fruit, she said, “The serpent deceived me.”
 - d. I do not doubt that either genetic makeup or childhood environment makes some more prone to certain sins than others, but we need to take responsibility for our actions instead of just blaming everyone else.
 - 2. Many biblical characters admitted their sins.
 - a. Jewish tradition says that when Aaron confessed the sins of the people and laid his hands upon the goat to confess the sins of the people, he said, “I have sinned.”
 - b. When Balaam saw the donkey his angel saw, he said, “I have sinned” (Num. 22:34).
 - c. When Daniel was making confessing for the Israelites, he said, “We have sinned and committed iniquity; we have done wickedly and rebelled (Dan. 9:5).
 - 3. Are you confessing your sins or are you making excuses?

WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE JESUS AS OUR PROPITIATION

- A. The Scriptures teach that Jesus is our propitiation.
 - 1. “He Himself [Jesus] is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world” (1 Jn. 2:2).
 - 2. “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 Jn. 4:10).
- B. A “propitiation” is that which appeases anger.
 - 1. When a husband buys his wife flowers after an argument, the flowers serve as a “propitiation.”
 - 2. Jesus became our propitiation to God.

WE KNOW IF ARE ABIDING IN JESUS

- A. If we abide in Jesus, we can have confidence when he comes (1 Jn. 2:28).

- B. How do we know if we are abiding in Jesus?
 - 1. We abide in Christ if we live the way Jesus lived (1 Jn. 2:6) — This doesn't mean that we must live perfectly, but this does mean that we need to model our lives after Jesus' life.
 - 2. We abide in Christ if we do not sin (1 Jn. 3:6).
 - a. "Sin" here is a present tense verb.
 - 1) This means that we cannot continue in sin.
 - 2) We cannot make sin a habit.
 - b. Sin cannot be a part of the Christian's personality.
- C. Are you abiding in Jesus?

WE KNOW HOW TO KEEP FROM FALLING

- A. Christians can fall from grace.
 - 1. 2 Pet. 2:20.
 - 2. "I have this against you, that you have left your first love" (Rev. 2:4).
- B. However, it is possible for Christians not to fall (2 Pet. 1:5-10).
 - 1. The one who practices these Christian virtues will never stumble.
 - 2. But, if we are not putting these virtues into practice, we will stumble.
- C. Are you practicing these Christian virtues?

CONCLUSION

- A. We can know that we have eternal life.
- B. We don't have to be perfect.
 - 1. If we had to be perfect, salvation would be dependent upon who we are, not on what God has done.
 - 2. Although we don't have to be perfect, we must be faithful (Rev. 2:10).
 - 3. Are you faithful?