

FOUNDATIONS

Track One : Believer to Disciple

Lesson 03 : Assurance of Salvation & Forgiveness

This lesson is designed to teach us the truth that every believer in Christ is assured of salvation and forgiveness that they have received freely from God. Believers can know for sure that they are saved and also overcome feelings of guilt, shame and condemnation.



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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New King James Version.

1. Assurance of Salvation

Is it possible for you to know that your sins are forgiven and be confident of your salvation? Can you be sure that you are on your way to heaven? Can you know without any doubt that God has saved you from the eternal consequences of sin?

Foundational elements of Assurance of Salvation

You can know without a doubt that you are saved. You can have the confident assurance or guarantee that you are saved and forgiven.

These elements provide insight into this Assurance:

1. The Bible's Authority
2. Christ's Work
3. Your Faith in Christ
4. The Spirit's Assurance
5. The Evidence of a Transformed Life

1.1. The Bible's Authority

God has provided a solid foundation of truth in His Word. His Word is truth (John 17:17). His word of promise is the guarantee (assurance) of our salvation.

1 John 5:11-13

John 5:24

1.2. Christ's Finished Work

On the cross Jesus said, "It is finished!" (John 19:30). Nothing else is required and there is nothing more that needs to be done to obtain salvation.

Hebrews 9:12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Hebrews 10:14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

Hebrews 10:18 Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

Ephesians 2:8, 9 We are therefore saved by His grace, through faith in Christ.

1.3. Your Faith in Christ

All that God requires is that we have and demonstrate faith in Jesus Christ as our Saviour.

John 3:16, 1 John 5:1

Faith is not a feeling. Sometimes you may 'feel' saved and sometimes you may not 'feel' anything.

Faith is not a dependence on our good works.

Faith is a choice we make to trust God.

Faith is a simple and yet complete trust in who He is (He cannot lie), His Word (what He says is final) and His finished work on the cross.

1.4. The Spirit's Assurance

Romans 8:15,16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children

Galatians 4:6 God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts.

1 John 3:24 We know it by the Spirit he gave us

1 John 5:10 Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this witness in his heart

The Holy Spirit brings to us a deep inner assurance of our salvation. We know we are saved.

1.5. The Evidence of a Transformed Life

2 Corinthians 5:17

Our lives being continually transformed into the image of Jesus Christ is evidence that we are in Him.

Philippians 2:12,13

God works in us and empowers us to work out our salvation - show that we are saved and walk as people who are saved.

1 John 3:6-9, 1 John 5:18

It does not mean we are 'perfect' and 'flawless'. But it does mean that we do not 'continue' in sin or living the way we used to live.

2. The Assurance of Forgiveness

When we do sin - do things that we know are not right in the sight of God, the Holy Spirit within us is 'grieved' and He lets us know. We are 'convicted' by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:29-32

However, when we sin, we realize we have done wrong, we choose not to continue in it, and ask the Lord to forgive us.

1 John 1:7-9 1 John 2:12

Once you have confessed – you can know you are forgiven. It is gone.

Forgiveness is the loving, voluntary cancellation of a debt.

.. "Sin is not a violation of a Law but of a Person that's God Alone".

Forgiveness leads to restoration and renewal of relationship.

2.1. Fundamental aspects of Forgiveness

1. Is based on Love
2. Is based on the price that Jesus paid
3. Sin is totally wiped clean
4. Forgiveness is continual

The price paid for our forgiveness is a one-time-event. Jesus died once. However, we receive forgiveness as we confess and repent according to 1 John 1:9

2.2. How does a person receive forgiveness'?

Repentance and faith

We turn away from our own sinful ways. ([Isaiah 55:6-7](#), Proverbs 28:13 Psalm 38:18, Ps. 51:17)

True repentance claims no rights while asking mercy for wrongs done. Real repentance expresses a broken, undemanding heart

Who Believes in him receives forgiveness through his name ([Acts 10:43](#))

Isn't God a loving God? Doesn't He unconditionally forgive people freely of all sin without their coming to Him in repentance? *No*.

- When He gives us the initial forgiveness in salvation, He does so in response to our repentance.

- He forgives us when we begin believing that Christ alone can save us by His own sacrifice and life.
- "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn. 1:9).

2.3. Overcoming feelings of condemnation

Forgiveness is something God does. It is not rooted in our own emotions. It doesn't depend on whether we forgive ourselves. Forgiveness is what God does in the books of heaven when He marks "canceled" over our debt of sin. We are forgiven when He declares us legally acquitted, regardless of how we might be feeling at the moment.

Most of us struggle with feelings of guilt and shame. Long after we have confessed our sins to God, we are apt to feel unforgiving. We might fear that we have been rejected by God.

2.4. Pictures that assures one's Forgiveness

1. God bags up our sins to throw them away.
"My transgression is sealed up in a bag, And You cover my iniquity."
Job 14:17
2. God blows away the sin barrier.
"I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. " Isaiah 44:22
3. God takes away our sins.
"As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us" - Psalm 103:12
4. God treats our sin like a vanquished foe.
"He will..subdue our iniquities. " - Micah 7:19
5. God puts our sins out of His sight.
"For You have cast all my sins behind Your back" - Isaiah 38:17
6. God puts our sins out of His mind.
"I will . . . remember their sins no more" - Jeremiah 31:34
7. God cancels the debt of our sin.

"I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake;
And I will not remember your sins" - Isaiah 43:25

8. God removes sin's stain and restores purity.
"Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow;
Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool." Isaiah 1:18

9. God buries our sin in the sea of forgetfulness
"You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea." Micah 7:19

So you can walk free without any sense of condemnation Romans 8:1

There is a difference between 'conviction' and 'condemnation'. The Holy Spirit convicts, but He does not condemn. It is the devil, who is the 'accuser of the brethren' (Revelations 12:10) who suppresses us with feelings of guilt, condemnation, worthlessness, etc.

Resist the condemnation the enemy brings.

What is granted by Divine authority is not a doubt!

Side Note:

- Forgiveness is not a license to continue in sin.
- If we continue in sin, it does hinder our ability to relate to the Lord because we know we are not doing what is right. 1 John 1:6,7, 1 John 3:21
- Some of us may be in bondage to certain addictions and will need additional help to get free.

3. Conclusion

Feelings are like thermometers. They fluctuate. Sometimes you feel great. Sometimes you feel "lousy." Just as your knowledge of your earthly citizenship is not based on how you feel, your salvation is not based on feelings but on God's promises.

When a person is in Christ he is safe. All that the devil may do is worry him, with doubts and unclear images. There may be times when you doubt your assurance.

Chose not to depend on your feelings - but on the foundation of His Word, His finished Work and the assurance of His Spirit in your life.

Consider the following guidelines for maintaining assurance.

1. Read your Bible, remind yourself of the solid foundation on which your salvation stands. "Avoid truth decay: Read your Bible every day"
2. Communicate with God through prayer, and confess every known sin.
3. Obey God's commandments, and do what you know is right.
4. Spend time with strong Christians, and let their love help you.
5. Reach out in concern to others because you love them
6. Recognize that your doubts and depressions may be more emotional than spiritual. This will help you avoid unnecessary feelings of guilt because of your supposed lack of faith.

Side Note:

During this lesson we do not want to get into a discussion on the question: "Can a Christian lose his salvation?" This requires a thorough examination and time to discuss, than is available. However, if you feel the need to do so, then please state in brief, it is important that a believer "works out" his salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12) and maintains a walk of holiness consistent with the word of God (Hebrews 12:14). It is possible for those who have tasted of the things of the Kingdom to fall away (Hebrews 6:4-6), to become a cast away (1 Corinthians 9:27), to make ship wreck of their faith (1 Timothy 1:19), to draw back (Hebrews 10:26,38,39) and sin unto death (1 John 5:16,17).]