

"Assurance of Salvation"

Part 2

2 Corinthians 5

Introduction: Last week we looked at a message that focused upon the assurance of salvation. In that message we looked at how a person is saved and determined that it is through faith in Jesus Christ. We must understand that we are unable to save ourselves from the sin which we have committed and that by grace God provided a Savior for us. We must believe that He died in our place as our Savior, that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day.

Then we looked at why we doubt our salvation. There are several things that can bring us to doubt.

1. Sin
2. False teaching
3. Emotions
4. Lack of faith

Today as we move on to part two, we are going to look at characteristics that should be found in our life as believers.

I. The Creation

Notice 2 Corinthians 5:17

This verse tells of the work of God in the believer. We are not mended people after salvation but we are new creations. This work is even greater than God's creation of the world. With the creation of the world God started with nothing so nothing stood in His way. But with us there was much in His way. There is our sin nature that was against Him. There was our own will that was completely selfish and all about us. There was our attitude that was self-centered and godless. There was our hatred of spiritual things. There was our love for the world. All of this was opposed to God and yet He performed a new creation within each believer. Do you see why this is greater than the creation of the world?

This new creation in the believer will manifest itself in one major way in our lives. It will be seen as the very traits of our Heavenly Father show forth from our lives. Keep in mind that the Holy Spirit lives within each one of us who are saved and the ministry of the Spirit is to glorify Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:13-14

¹³ *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.*

¹⁴ *Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

Romans 8:9

⁹ *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

John 16:13-14

¹³ *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

¹⁴ *He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

The Holy Spirit that lives within each believer desires to manifest Jesus Christ in our lives and when He does this it can give you the assurance of eternal life. The question is, "What does this look like?"

II. The Manifestation of Christ in us.

In the book of 1 John, we read about fellowship. That is the theme of the letter.

Notice 1 John 1:1-4

Here we see that John invites his readers to enjoy the very same fellowship which he and the other disciples had with Jesus. As he goes on in this letter, he talks about how we can attain that sweet fellowship and as he does, he points to characteristics that must be found in our lives if we are going to experience that fellowship. I want to look at some of these characteristics because if they are in your life, you can have great assurance that you are saved.

1. Obedience to the Word.

Notice 1 John 2:3-6

In order to enjoy fellowship with our Lord we must live in obedience to His Word. That is what John is stating here. As believers this should be our desire. We will not do it perfectly but the desire should be in us. So, walking in obedience to God's Word is

evidence that you are a child of God. There is within us the potential to walk contrary to the Word of God when we allow the sin nature to control us. This happened at the church at Corinth.

1 Corinthians 3:1-4

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

² I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

³ For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

⁴ For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

Getting back to the point, when we are saved and the Spirit dwells within us, He will long to walk in the Truth of the Word and so as we allow Him to control us, we then see evidence of salvation. Before we were saved, we did not long to walk in obedience to the Word but as new creations we now have the ability to be obedient. This should be one of the major changes within our lives. True saving faith should manifest itself in what we do.

James 2:14-18

¹⁴ What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

¹⁵ If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

¹⁶ And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

¹⁷ Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

¹⁸ Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

2. Love for fellow believers.

Notice 1 John 2:9-11

In order to enjoy fellowship with our Lord we must love our fellow believers. Before salvation we would gravitate toward people of the world because those were the people with whom we shared common ground. We spend time with people who enjoyed the same sinful lifestyles that we did. But after salvation it would only take a short amount of time to find out that you no longer had the same things in common. Let us notice something that happened to Israel shortly after they departed Egypt.

Exodus 15:22-25

22 So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.

23 And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.

24 And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

25 And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,

The water was bitter at Marah and this is a picture of how the things of the world no longer fit in our lives after we are saved. The tree here is symbolic of the cross and so what we learn is that if Christ is not in what we are involved in then life can be rather bitter. So, after salvation the Spirit longs for the fellowship with other believers because we have all things in common.

So, if your group of friends are no longer comfortable to be around and you long to gather with other Christians then that is a sign that you are saved. Now let me also add that you can resist the Spirit and you can hold tightly to your worldly friends but you will be miserable.

2 Peter 2:6-8

6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrhah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

7 And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)

3. Sin's pattern broken.

Notice 1 John 3:4-10

The idea in these verses is that a believer cannot continue to sin habitually. When we were saved it was then that sin's pattern was broken.

Notice 1 John 3:5 again.

Jesus came to take away our sins in two ways.

- a. From our account.
- b. From our lives.

So, one of the evidences of true salvation is that sin's pattern was broken in your life. John is not saying that you will not sin. He already stated that we will.

1 John 1:8-10

⁸ *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

⁹ *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

¹⁰ *If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

We do sin but if we are going to enjoy fellowship with our Lord then we must forsake our sin and repent. This does not mean that you cannot fall back into sin because you certainly can. Many believers have fallen deep into sin. Consider David and the sins in his life as a believer. Consider Moses and his sin of murder. Consider Peter and his denial of the Lord. You will not be perfect and you may even struggle with a reoccurring sin but sin's pattern will be broken and that is evidence of true salvation.

4. Sensitive to sin.

Romans 7:24-25

²⁴ **O wretched man that I am!** *who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

²⁵ *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*

When Paul wrote this, he was a seasoned Apostle and as he grew in his knowledge and faith, he became more and more sensitive to sin. That is why he calls himself a wretched man.

Application:

When we get saved the Holy Spirit causes us to be sensitive to sin and the more, we grow the more sensitive we become. If you are saved you should see a growing sensitivity to sin in your life. Things that you were comfortable with before salvation now make you uncomfortable. When you hear someone use the Lord's name in vain does it bother you? When you hear someone talk about their immoral lifestyle does it bother you? That sensitivity is evidence that your faith is real.

Conclusion:

If you are truly saved there will be changes in your life. There will be new desires and new priorities. Those changes are the result of you being a new creation. The changes are evidence that God is working in your life and He is making you into the image of His dear Son.

Romans 8:28-29

²⁸ *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

²⁹ *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*