

"Is your Salvation Real?"

1 John 3

Introduction: Today we are stepping away from our study of the chaos in the world and we are going to look at a message that deals with the evidence of salvation. There is a verse in 2 Corinthians that I want to start with.

2 Corinthians 13:5

⁵ *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*

Paul was concerned about some of the people at Corinth and therefore he wanted them to take a close look at their own lives to be sure they were saved. There are many people today who call themselves Christians but they are not.

Matthew 7:22-23

²² *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?*

²³ *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

There are many people who have the terminology of a believer but they do not have salvation. This then leads to a question, "How can I know for sure that I am saved?"

To answer this question, I want to take you to the epistle of 1 John but before we get to the verses there is something that we need to understand. For years I was convinced that the theme of 1 John was fellowship. But as I learn and study, I can see that John did focus upon fellowship in chapter 1 but then the focus changed.

Notice 1 John 1:1-3

1 John 5:13

¹³ *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

This certainly then connects with his Gospel writing.

John 21:30-31

³⁰ *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:*

³¹ *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

In the Gospel of John, he tells his readers how to be saved and here in this epistle he tells his readers how to KNOW they are saved. Let us now consider a few of the characteristics of a true believer.

➤ **Obedience to the Word of God**

Notice 1 John 2:3-6

John tells us here that when we walk in obedience to His commands this is proof that we KNOW Him. Now some people would say that to KNOW Him is to walk in fellowship. But that is not accurate. John makes this clear in his Gospel.

John 17:3

³ *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

John 10:14

¹⁴ *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.*

These verses make it very clear that to be saved is to KNOW God. Getting back to the point, when a person is TRULY saved one of the evidences will be obedience to the Word of God.

John 10:27-28

²⁷ *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:*

²⁸ *And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

John 14:23-24a

²³ *Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

²⁴ *He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings:*

Many verses speak of the believer walking in obedience to the Word of God. Now I also need to say that none of us walk in Jesus' commandments perfectly. John also recognized this.

1 John 1:8

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

Let me now pull this together. True believers are not perfect but there will be the desire to walk in obedience and there will be times of obedience. There will also be within the believer the desire to know the Word of God and then to live it.

Notice the words of H.A. Ironside.

"When you are born again, you love to follow Jesus, and if you do not, you are not a Christian. Take that home. Examine your own foundations a bit....It makes a tremendous difference what you do. If you do not behave yourself, it shows that you are not a real Christian. I know that a real Christian may fail, but the difference can be seen in Peter and Judas. Peter failed, and failed terribly, but he was genuine, and one look from Jesus sent him out weeping bitterly; his heart was broken to think that he had so dishonored his Lord. But Judas companied with the Lord almost three-and-a-half years, and was a devil all the time; he was a thief, and was seeking his own interest. He was even made the treasurer of the company, and he held the bag, but we read, "He bare away what was put therein" (John 12:6), as this has been literally translated. At last remorse overtook him, not genuine repentance, and what was the result? He went and hanged himself. He was never a child of God. There is a great difference, you see, between a Christian and a false professor."

James 2:14-20

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.*

¹⁹ *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.*

²⁰ *But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?*

Notice what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 7:17-23

¹⁷ *Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.*

¹⁸ *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.*

¹⁹ *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

²⁰ *Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

²¹ *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

²² *Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?*

²³ *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

➤ **Sin's Power and Pattern Broken**

Notice 1 John 3:5-10

Here we see that John is very clear that the person who sins is not a child of God but is a child of the Devil. Now we know that John is not talking about sinless perfection here because of what he said in chapter one. So, what is John saying here?

He is talking about a person who continues in sin and claims to be a child of God. The two do not mix.

Notice 1 John 3:5 again.

Jesus was manifested to take away our sin. This is not just from our account but also out of our lives. There are people who claim to be saved but their lives have never changed and they continue in a life of sinful practices. Listen to the words of A. C. Gaebelien.

"Salvation and a holy walk are inseparably connected... Where there is true salvation and eternal life, it is proved by a godly walk...But he [the apostle Paul] knew, as every Christian should know, that the grace which had saved him, which taught him to live soberly, righteously and godly, would also keep him and enable him to persevere through all hindrances."

Grace has saved us and it is grace that delivers us from sin. This does not mean that a believer will not struggle with sin but let us understand that there is a difference in struggling with sin and practicing sin.

2 Corinthians 5:17 - 18a

¹⁷ Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

¹⁸ And all things are of God

There are many people today who claim salvation but they continue in their sin. There are people who claim to be homosexual believers. This is NOT Biblical.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

⁹ Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

¹⁰ Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

¹¹ And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

When a person is truly saved then he or she is a child of God and God will NEVER allow His children to live in sin.

Hebrews 12:6-10

⁶ For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

⁷ If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

⁸ But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

⁹ Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

¹⁰ For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

Let us notice what happened in Corinth.

1 Corinthians 11:29-30

²⁹ For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

³⁰ For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

Conclusion:

Listen to the words of F. W. Grant

"Grace is that which breaks the dominion of sin, sets the soul right to go on with God, and if this be not the result of it, grace has not been learned at all, nor can it be pleaded as availing in behalf of those who, whatever they may profess, show themselves uninfluenced by it."

I show you all of this so that you might be sure you are saved.

Jeremiah 17:9

⁹ The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?