

**HOW AM I ASSURED
I'M A FOLLOWER
OF CHRIST?**



HOW AM I ASSURED I'M A FOLLOWER OF CHRIST? (PART ONE)

JOHN 1:12 (ESV) But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

2 CORINTHIANS 13:5 (NIV) Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?

MATTHEW 7:22-23 (ERV)

22 On that last Day many will call me Lord. They will say, 'Lord, Lord, by the power of your name we spoke for God. And by your name we forced out demons and did many miracles.' **23** Then I will tell those people clearly, 'Get away from me, you people who do wrong. I never knew you.'

PROBLEMS WHEN YOU ARE UNCERTAIN OR WHEN YOU HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT YOUR SALVATION:

A. It LEADS TO A LOSS OF JOY.

Lack of assurance is a big deal because it leads to a loss of joy for a believer in doubt. Fear arising from doubt troubles the soul. The troubled soul loses peace. When peace evaporates, joy also departs.
(Assurance of Salvation: Dispelling Doubts with Infallible Truth by John R. Van Gelderen)

B. WE BECOME SUSCEPTIBLE TO BEING OVERCOME BY THE WORLD INSTEAD OF OVERCOMING THROUGH FAITH.

REASONS PEOPLE DOUBT THEIR SALVATION:

- STRUGGLING with SINFUL HABITS

PSALM 32:3-4 (TLB)

3 ...But my dishonesty made me miserable and filled my days with frustration.

4 All day and all night your hand was heavy on me.

My strength evaporated like water on a sunny day.

- FEELING a CONDEMNATION FROM SATAN

- HEARING FALSE TEACHINGS

*"If you are not reading your Bible and praying early in the morning every day, not going to church weekly, and not serving,
YOU NEED TO DOUBT IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN."*

"If you can't remember the exact time and date that you "receive Jesus" then maybe you are not a Christian."

- OVEREMPHASIZED ON THE EMOTIONS OR ON THE SELF.

That is ASSURANCE BY FEELINGS and NOT ASSURANCE BY FAITH.

This is because WE have a FAULTY UNDERSTANDING of HOW WE are SAVED.

The key is not us! The key is God, based on His sure words. When we believe on Jesus, we have eternal life—because He says so! Assurance comes from focusing on that which is sure. Doubt, however, enters when we shift from a blessed focus on the OBJECT OF FAITH and concentrate instead on the SUBJECT OF FAITH—OURSELVES. Generally, this includes a focus on personal performance or the specifics of our particular prayer at the time of our salvation or, in some cases, both.

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I. BECAUSE GOD SAYS SO

1 JOHN 5:13 (MSG)

My purpose in writing is simply this: that you who believe in God's Son will know beyond the shadow of a doubt that you have eternal life, the reality and not the illusion.

1 JOHN 5:13 (NIV)

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may KNOW that YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.

The word KNOW means absolute assurance.

The word KNOW is repeated 26 times in the book of 1 John.

It literally means INTIMACY.

- IT IS AN INTIMATE LEVEL OF KNOWING HIM.
- It is not knowing intellectually.

JOHN 5:24 (AMP)

I **ASSURE** you and most solemnly say to you, the person who hears My word [the one who heeds My message], and believes and trusts in Him who sent Me, has (possesses now)

ETERNAL LIFE [that is, eternal life actually begins—the believer is transformed], and does not come into judgment and condemnation, but has passed [over] from death into life.

**YOU KNOW YOU ARE A FOLLOWER OF CHRIST BECAUSE GOD SAYS SO.
IT IS THE PROMISE OF GOD'S WORD.**

LUKE 23:39-43 (NLT)

39 One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, "So you're the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you're at it!" **40** But the other criminal protested, "Don't you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? **41** We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn't done anything wrong." **42** Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom."

43 And Jesus replied, "I **ASSURE** you, **TODAY YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE.**"

LESSONS FROM RICK WARREN'S COMMENTARY

1. So here SALVATION IS IMMEDIATE. (*Today*)
2. It is CERTAIN. (*you will*)
3. It is a RELATIONSHIP. (*you will be with me*)
4. It is A PLACE FOREVER. (*in paradise*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Was there a time when you were uncertain that you were saved? Please share.
2. Read Luke 23:39-43. What does this mean for you today?