

Assurance: The Certainty of Salvation

I have the most important subject in the universe that I want to talk to you about. If you have it, you have everything that you need. Without it, you don't have anything you need, no matter how much you have. It's the reason Jesus came to earth. It's what the Bible most frequently calls... salvation.

Do you have it? Do you maybe think you do, but don't know for sure? Or maybe you are thinking, "Well, I think I had it at one point, but I lost it." If you are thinking any of these things, by the time you are done reading, you should not just *think* you have salvation. You should be sure. You should have *assurance*.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU HAVE IT?

"In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 1:13).

God the Spirit applies salvation to us. Everything that you've got in Christ comes by the power of the Spirit. On papers of ownership in New Testament times the legitimate owner pressed his seal into the hot wax as proof the purchase was completed. When we believe in Jesus and commit our lives to Him as our Lord and Savior, the Spirit "seals the deal" to make us God's children for eternity.

So the question really is, "How do I know if I have the Holy Spirit?" Well, there are seven main things the Spirit does in the lives of believers:

1) *Fruit of the Spirit*. Apple trees have apples. Christians have the fruit of the Spirit. *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control"*

(Galatians 5:22-23). If you're saved, you're more godly than you used to be, changing to be more like Christ.

2) *Gifts of the Spirit*. Each of us has a different set of spiritual gifts, given to us by God through the Holy Spirit. If you're saved, you have a desire to use these gifts to honor God and further His Kingdom. *"So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them"* (Romans 12:5-6).

3) *Conviction of sin*. The Spirit brings conviction of sin: *"He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment"* (John 16:8). Are you grieved when you sin? That is a sign that you have true salvation.

4) *Guidance into truth*. The Spirit guides us into truth. John 16:13 says, *"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth."* Is that going on in your life? Do you hunger for God's truth?

5) *Inner leading*. The Spirit prompts us to make things right, and to respond to what we learn from the Bible. *"For all who are led by the Spirit of God are Sons of God"* (Romans 8:14).

6) *Comfort*. The Spirit came to give comfort, and the Bible describes the Spirit as our *"Helper"* (John 14:16). Could you testify that He gives you strength to handle situations that once drove you to defeat and despair?

7) *Perseverance of faith*. *"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us"* (1 John 2:19). Perseverance—enduring in the faith, even with it's hard even when the pressure is on. Christ made it clear that if you are truly saved, then you will endure to the end. The Spirit gives the strength and encouragement we need in order to persevere in the faith when life gets hard.

Are you seeing God at work in these areas of your life? God doesn't want His children wondering if they're saved. God wants you to know that you're His child. Romans 8:16 says that the Spirit

of God *“bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.”* If you’re wondering, *“God, am I Your child?”* get alone, get those Scriptures open in front of you and pray, *“God, do I really know You?”* The Spirit will either bear witness of “Yes” or “No”—you don’t have to wonder.

CAN YOU LOSE YOUR SALVATION?

Can you lose your salvation? Like, “Well, I think I used to have it, but then I kinda messed up some things and God was like, ‘Get out of here.’” Does that sound like God to you? Well, let’s just look at what the Scripture says, because it doesn’t matter what I think. Let’s get an answer straight from God’s Word. The Bible says you *“were sealed”* (Ephesians 1:13). God did the deal, He signed on the dotted line for you by giving you the Holy Spirit, who the Bible says, *“is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it”* (Ephesians 1:14).

Have you ever bought a house? What do you do when you buy a house? You go shopping, you find one you like, and then what’s the first thing you say? “I want the house.” What do they say? “Money. I need some money.” Actually the word in verse 14 that’s translated “guarantee” in the English Standard Version is translated “earnest” in the old King James Version. That’s what it’s called in the real estate business: earnest money. It’s a down payment. It’s an assurance. It’s like, “I’m in! And here’s a little bit to show how serious I am, and I’ll be back with the rest after a while to take what’s mine.” Get it?

Now the Holy Spirit is what God gave you as His earnest or His down payment or His

guarantee. Notice again what Ephesians 1:14 says about the Holy Spirit. He is *“the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it.”* God’s already bought you full. You are bought and paid for—all He has to do now is redeem you. He’s got you on layaway. All He has to do is just come and say, “Okay, I’m here. She’s mine. I bought her.” God’s own possession is the people who are saved.

ARE YOU SAVED?

Maybe you're reading this and you're like, "You know what, I don't know if I'm saved. I'm not sure." Maybe you've never heard the message the way you read it today. Maybe you've heard it, but you weren't listening. Maybe you thought you believed, but you never really expressed your faith in Christ alone. Maybe you've heard it and thought you had it, but you don't have a conversion story. You don't need to know the date or the month that you chose, but you need to know that you chose. "*But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God*" (John 1:12). I have no business saying I'm one of God's children if I have not received Him. So maybe you would say, "I'm not sure, but I want to be." Then I would ask you right now, do you believe that you're a sinner? Do you believe that Jesus Christ died to pay the penalty for your sin and rose again to prove that He's God? If this is you, in this moment, turn from your sin and embrace Jesus Christ by faith as the only basis for your forgiveness.

Or maybe you say, "I have received the message. I have trusted Christ for my salvation." If God in His grace has opened your eyes to the truth that is found in Christ, when this whole thing is over, you win big-time. Now that's an anchor for the soul. I am saved. I am in Christ. My sins have been forgiven. God has opened my eyes. That's the good news of the gospel. It should cause our hearts to rejoice! If you feel a renewed joy in the assurance of your salvation, tell God by praying to Him now.

Lord, how good You are to me. You loved me and gave Your Son as an atoning sacrifice for my sins. In Your abundant grace, You have drawn me to Yourself, opened my eyes to Your truth, and given me the humility to turn from my sin. Lord, I claim nothing for myself, I have done nothing—You have done everything. I thank You for Your mercy, and that my salvation was secured when I placed my faith in Christ alone. Lord, I rejoice in that truth and give You thanks. In Your strong and precious name, Amen.

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