

Problem-Solving Chapters of the Bible

ETERNAL PROBLEMS: I John 5

Many people have no real assurance that, if they were to die, they would go to Heaven. However, the Bible is clear that individuals can *know* that they have eternal life!

“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.” (1 John 5:13)

This verse is part of a very helpful chapter about confidence toward God. It is not the only verse in the New Testament that says a believer in Jesus Christ can know that he is saved. Look up Romans 10:9, I Thessalonians 5:9, and II Timothy 1:12, and find examples of scriptural statements that you can be sure you are saved. The fifth chapter of the First Epistle of John, however, is the best place to find help for all the problems that cause people to be in doubt about eternity. People question their salvation either because they are not saved, or because they don't think that they “feel saved,” or because they don't understand salvation enough to know if they are saved or not. Whatever your problem about assurance of salvation, you can find the answer in I John 5. And it is all important that you make sure you are saved! Where you spend eternity is more important than anything. For that matter, solving problems about eternity is important to solving other problems. Matthew 6 shows us that solving money problems is based on knowing that God is your Father. Philippians 4 solves emotional problems based on knowing that you are right with God. Romans 6 promises victory over sin problems to those who are saved and “free” from sin. Ephesians 5 tells how *saved* people can solve marriage problems. The most important issue to settle is the question of your own salvation. See in I John 5 how you can *know* that you have eternal life!

I. Believe the Record.

Read carefully verses 10 through 13. See that there are two kinds of testimony on which we can base the assurance of our salvation. Verse 10 talks about an *inward witness* and an *outward witness*. The inward evidence is subjective (“*the witness in himself*”) and the outward witness is objective (“*the record that God gave*”). To be sure that you are saved, you must begin with the outward, objective witness, which is the written Word of God. Follow what this chapter says about the written record in these four verses.

A. Not to believe the Bible is to call God a liar!

“He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his son.” (v. 10b)

B. The scriptural record says that God gave us eternal life in His son (v. 11).

This is the Gospel story. God gave us His Son through the virgin birth. Jesus lived a perfect life and died an atoning death for our sins. He arose from the dead to provide for us the gift of eternal life. “*This life is in his [God's] Son.*” The only way to get eternal life is through the death burial, and resurrection of God's Son.

C. The scriptural promise is that receiving God's Son means receiving eternal life (v. 12).

Eternal life is the gift of God (Romans 6:23). God's Son, Jesus Christ, is also God's gift to man (John 3:16). The gift of eternal life is given in God's Son. Those who receive the Son by believing on His name receive the eternal life offered as a gift in Him (See John 1:12). Do you have the Son? If you do, you also have eternal life!

“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” (I John 5:12)

How can you know that you have God's Son? John 1:12 (Read it!) says that we receive Him by *believing* on Him. To believe on Jesus Christ is to trust in Him for your salvation. This is not a difficult matter. The Bible is clear that anyone who turns to Christ from his sin will be saved. Look up these promises found in the book of John—3:36, 4:10, 5:24, 6:37, 10:9.

D. Because the written Word of God says that the believer in Christ is saved, those who believe on Him can be *sure* they are saved!

If you can claim a promise in the Bible that says you are saved, then you have God's Word that

you are on your way to Heaven! Your feelings change, but God's written Word will never change (See I Peter 1:23). God cannot lie. If He says that you are saved, you can be sure that you are. There are verses in the Bible that say, "If you do this, Christ will save you." John 5:24 and Romans 10:13 are two of those verses. Obviously, if you take the step these scriptures tell you to take, you have the promise of the result God has said would follow. Find a verse like this that you understand, and then take the step all such verses call on you to take: trust Jesus to save you. Then you will have the assurance that God's Word gives that you are in possession of eternal life (forgiven, born again, saved)!

II. Keep His Commandments.

The Bible is the outward witness that will give us objective assurance that we are saved. It is the solid rock on which we must base our claim to eternal life. Beyond this assurance, as we have seen, there is an inward witness giving the believer subjective assurance that he belongs to God. Let's follow in I John the teaching that a change takes place in the heart of the saved that gives a person blessed assurance.

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." (2:3)

"This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life. These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." (2:25-27)

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." (3:18-21)

"He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." (3:24)

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." (5:1-3)

From I John 2:3 we learn that keeping the commandments of Christ helps the believer to *know* that he *knows* the Lord. This inward assurance comes from the Holy spirit, we see in I John 3:24. When you believe on Christ, the Spirit comes to live in you. As you obey the Lord, He assures you; when you disobey, He condemns you (3:18-21). The inward assurance of salvation comes when you follow Christ after you come to Him. This is what people mean by "feeling saved." Galatians 5:22 says,

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith . . ."

Having God's Spirit in your heart makes things really different for you! The key to assurance is to let Him have His way.

One reason why many don't "feel saved" is because they aren't living right. If you will follow I John 1:6-9, you can come back into fellowship with God and get back the inward assurance of your salvation.

"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Are you saved? Solve this problem by claiming the promises of God, trusting Christ as your own Savior, and then going on to live for Him.