

## 3

### ASSURANCE OF SALVATION AND FORGIVENESS

*(This lesson is designed to teach us the truth that every believer in Christ is assured of salvation and forgiveness that they have received freely from God. Believers can know for sure that they are saved and also overcome feelings of guilt, shame and condemnation).*

#### Assurance of Salvation

Is it possible for you to know that your sins are forgiven and be confident of your salvation? Can you be sure that you are on your way to heaven? Can you know without any doubt that God has saved you from the eternal consequences of sin?

#### Foundational elements of Assurance of Salvation

You can know without a doubt that you are saved. You can have the confident assurance or guarantee that you are saved and forgiven.

These elements provide insight into this Assurance:

- The Bible's Authority
- Christ's Finished Work
- Your Faith in Christ
- The Spirit's Assurance
- The Evidence of a Transformed Life

#### ***The Bible's Authority***

God has provided a solid foundation of truth in His Word. His Word is truth (John 17:17). His Word of promise is the guarantee (assurance) of our salvation.

1 John 5:11-13

**And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.**

John 5:24

**Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.**

#### ***Christ's Finished Work***

On the Cross, Jesus said, "... It is finished ..." (John 19:30).

Nothing else is required and there is nothing more that needs to be done to obtain salvation.

Hebrews 9:12

**Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.**

Hebrews 10:14

**For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.**

Hebrews 10:18

**Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.**

Ephesians 2:8,9

**For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.**

### ***Your Faith in Christ***

All that God requires is that we have and demonstrate faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior.

John 3:16

**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

1 John 5:1

**Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.**

Faith is not a feeling. Sometimes you may 'feel' saved and sometimes you may not 'feel' anything.

Faith is not a dependence on our good works.

Faith is a choice we make to trust God.

Faith is a simple and yet complete trust in who He is (He cannot lie), His Word (what He says is final) and His finished work on the Cross.

### ***The Spirit's Assurance***

The Holy Spirit brings to us a deep inner assurance of our salvation. We know we are saved.

Romans 8:15,16

**For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.**

Galatians 4:6

**And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"**

1 John 3:24

**Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.**

1 John 5:10

**He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.**



### ***The Evidence of a Transformed Life***

Our lives being continually transformed into the image of Jesus Christ is evidence that we are in Him.

2 Corinthians 5:17

**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**

God works in us and empowers us to work out our salvation—show that we are saved and walk as people who are saved.

Philippians 2:12,13

**Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.**

1 John 3:6-9

**Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.**

It does not mean we are 'perfect' and 'flawless.' But it does mean that we do not 'continue' in sin or living the way we used to live.

1 John 5:18

**We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.**

### **The Assurance of Forgiveness**

When we do sin—do things that we know are not right in the sight of God—the Holy Spirit within us is 'grieved' and He lets us know. We are thus 'convicted' by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:29-32

**Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.**

However, when we sin, we realize we have done wrong, we choose not to continue in it, and ask the Lord to forgive us.

***"Sin is not a violation of a Law  
but of a Person that's God  
Alone***

1 John 1:7-9

**But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses 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.**

Once you have confessed—you can know you are forgiven. It is gone.

1 John 2:12

**I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.**

Forgiveness is the loving, voluntary cancellation of a debt.

Forgiveness leads to restoration and renewal of relationship.

## Fundamental aspects of forgiveness

- \* Is based on love
- \* Is based on the price that Jesus paid
- \* Sin is totally wiped clean
- \* Forgiveness is continual

The price paid for our forgiveness is a one-time-event. Jesus died once. However, we receive forgiveness as we confess and repent.

1 John 1:9

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

## How does a person receive forgiveness?

### *Repentance and faith*

We turn away from our own sinful ways.

Isaiah 55:6-7

**Seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.**

Proverbs 28:13

**He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.**

Psalm 38:18

**For I will declare my iniquity; I will be in anguish over my sin.**

Psalm 51:17

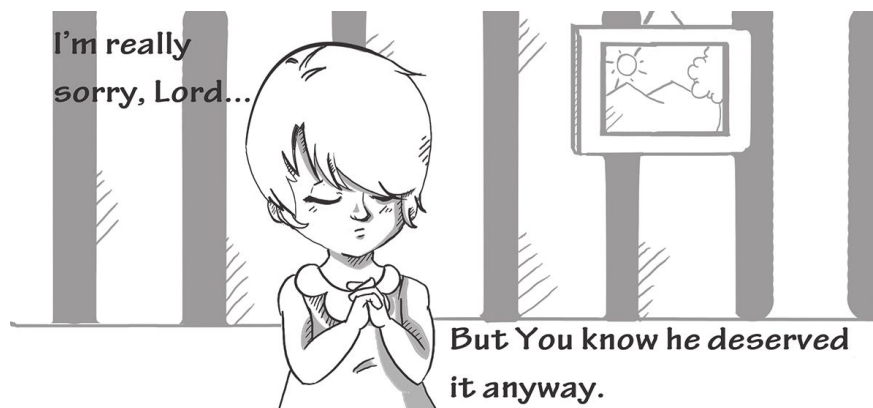
**The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise.**

True repentance claims no rights while asking mercy for wrongs done. Real repentance expresses a broken, undemanding heart.

Acts 10:43

**To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.**

Isn't God a loving God? Doesn't He unconditionally forgive people freely of all sin without their coming to Him in repentance? **No.**



- When He gives us the initial forgiveness in salvation, He does so in response to our repentance.
- He forgives us when we begin believing that Christ alone can save us by His own sacrifice and life.

1 John 1:9

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

## Overcoming feelings of condemnation

Forgiveness is something God does. It is not rooted in our own emotions. It doesn't depend on whether we forgive ourselves. Forgiveness is what God does in the books of heaven when He marks "canceled" over our debt of sin. We are forgiven when He declares us legally acquitted, regardless of how we might be feeling at the moment.

Most of us struggle with feelings of guilt and shame. Long after we have confessed our sins to God, we are apt to feel unforgiving. We might fear that we have been rejected by God.

## Pictures that assures one's forgiveness

*God bags up our sins to throw them away.*

Job 14:17

**My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and You cover my iniquity.**

*God blows away the sin barrier.*

Isaiah 44:22

**I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, and like a cloud, your sins ...**

*God takes away our sins.*

Psalms 103:12

**As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.**

*God treats our sin like a vanquished foe.*

Micah 7:19

**He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.**

*God puts our sins out of His sight.*

Isaiah 38:17

**Indeed it was for my own peace that I had great bitterness; but You have lovingly delivered my soul from the pit of corruption, for You have cast all my sins behind Your back.**

*God puts our sins out of His mind.*

Jeremiah 31:34

**... For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.**

*God cancels the debt of our sin.*

Isaiah 43:25

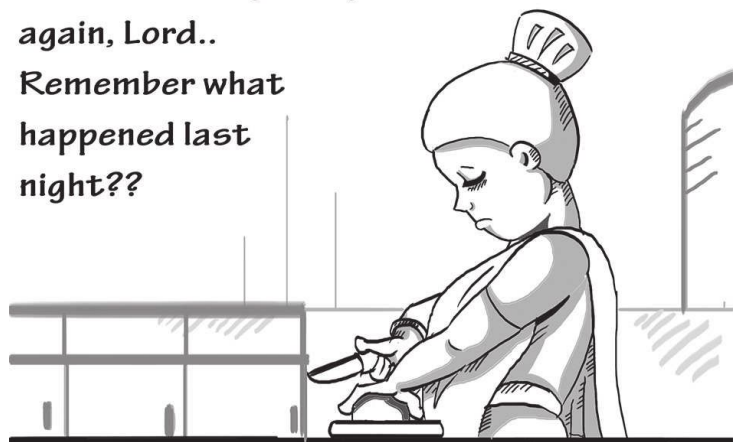
**I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins.**

*God removes sin's stain and restores purity.*

Isaiah 1:18

**... Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.**

**I wanted to say sorry again, Lord.. Remember what happened last night??**



*God buries our sin in the sea of forgetfulness*

Micah 7:19

... **You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.**

Romans 8:1

**There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.**

There is a difference between 'conviction' and 'condemnation.' The Holy Spirit convicts, but He does not condemn. It is the devil, who is the 'accuser of the brethren' who suppresses us with feelings of guilt, condemnation, worthlessness, etc.

Revelations 12:10

**Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.**

Resist the condemnation the enemy brings.

What is granted by divine authority is not a doubt!

Side Note:

- Forgiveness is not a license to continue in sin.
- If we continue in sin, it does hinder our ability to relate to the Lord because we know we are not doing what is right.

1 John 1:6,7

**If we claim to have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin.**

1 John 3:21

**Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God.**

- Some of us may be in bondage to certain addictions and will need additional help to get free.

## Conclusion

Feelings are like thermometers. They fluctuate. Sometimes you feel "great." Sometimes you feel "lousy." Just as your knowledge of your earthly citizenship is not based on how you feel, **your salvation is not based on feelings but on God's promises.**

When a person is in Christ, he is safe. All that the devil may do is worry him with doubts and unclear images. There may be times when you doubt your assurance.

Choose not to depend on your feelings—but on the foundation of His Word, His finished Work and the assurance of His Spirit in your life.

***Avoid truth decay: Read your Bible every day!***

*Consider the following guidelines for maintaining assurance.*

- *Read your Bible, remind yourself of the solid foundation on which your salvation stands.*
- *Communicate with God through prayer and confess every known sin.*
- *Obey God's commandments and do what you know is right.*
- *Spend time with strong Christians and let their love help you.*
- *Reach out in concern to others because you love them.*
- *Recognize that your doubts and depressions may be more emotional than spiritual. This will help you avoid unnecessary feelings of guilt because of your supposed lack of faith.*

*[In this lesson, we DO NOT want to get into a discussion on the question: "Can a Christian lose his salvation?" This requires a thorough examination and time to discuss. However, we need to know that it is important for a believer to "work out" his salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12) and maintain a walk of holiness consistent with the Word of God (Hebrews 12:14). It is possible for those who have tasted of the things of the Kingdom to fall away (Hebrews 6:4-6), to become a cast-away (1 Corinthians 9:27), to make a shipwreck of their faith (1 Timothy 1:19), to draw back (Hebrews 10:26,38,39) and sin unto death (1 John 5:16,17)].*

## **KEY MEMORY VERSES**

Romans 8:1

**There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.**

Romans 8:15,16

**For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.**

Psalm 103:12

**As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.**

