

"BLESSED ASSURANCE"

Romans 8:12-17

Have you come to the point in your life where you know with absolute certainty that you will go to heaven when you die? Maybe you are thinking, "Pastor, how can I know for sure?"

The New Testament Scriptures are loaded with objective truths that speak to this issue. Consider the following . . .

John 10:27–30... "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; **28** and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. **29** "My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand. **30** "I and the Father are one."

1 John 5:13... These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of

God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

God does not want you to live with that nagging doubt concerning whether you are truly saved. That's why the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to spell out the way of salvation so clearly when he wrote his letter to the Roman believers . . .

Romans 5:8... But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 10:9–10... that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; **10** for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

Do you believe that Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sins and rose again from the dead so that you might receive the gifts of eternal and abundant life? Do you trust Him alone for

salvation? If your answer to these questions is "yes," you are saved! Today I want to share a truth that will set you free . . .

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONFIRMS YOUR SALVATION.

In our text today I want you to see four ways the Holy Spirit provides the assurance we need.

1. HE CHANGES YOUR CONDUCT.

Romans 8:12–14... So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh— 13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

In this section, Paul reminds the believers of their magnificent privileges through the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit. In the previous eleven verses of chapter 8, he has pointed out that . . .

- **they are forgiven for all their sins**
- **they are set free from the law of sin and death**
- **they are not to be dominated by sin**
- **they walk by the Spirit**
- **they have minds that are set on the Spirit**
- **they have life and peace through the Spirit**

The "FLESH" includes all the ungodly motives, affections, principles, purposes, words, and actions that sin generates in order to drag us back into the pit of depravity. A person whose life is characterized by the things of the flesh is not a true Christian and is spiritually dead.

MacArthur stated . . .

The pattern of a true believer's life, on the other hand, will show that he not only professes Christ but that he lives his life by Christ's Spirit and is habitually putting to death the sinful and ungodly deeds of the body. Consequently, he will live, that is,

possess and persevere to the fulness of eternal life given him in Christ.¹

We are obligated to live out our God-given life and to put to death everything which threatens it or is incompatible with it.

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONFIRMS YOUR SALVATION.

The Holy Spirit *changes your conduct!* This is a key to assurance of salvation. Is it evident in your life?

2. HE FRAMES YOUR FREEDOM.

Romans 8:15a... For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again.

Spiritual bondage describes the state of being trapped under the power of sin, deception, or demonic influence. It is a slavery of the heart and mind that prevents a person from living in the

¹ John F. MacArthur Jr., [*Romans*](#), vol. 1, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 424.

truth and freedom God intends. This bondage may be expressed in . . .

- **addictions**
- **destructive behaviors**
- **fear of failure**
- **false beliefs**
- **idolatry**
- **fear of death**

The Bible's solution is not self-effort or moral reform, but the redeeming work of Christ. Spiritual freedom comes when a person repents, receives Jesus as Savior and Lord, and walks in the power of the Holy Spirit. Unhealthy and unwarranted fear can creep into a believer's life.

The Christian who neglects study of Scripture, who neglects God in prayer, who neglects fellowship with God's people, and who is careless about His obedience to God will invariably have doubts about his salvation, because he is indifferent to God

and the things of God. Even for the obedient child of God, doubts about his relationship to God can easily slip into the mind during times of pain, sorrow, failure, or disappointment. Satan, the great accuser of God's people, is always ready to take advantage of such circumstances to plant seeds of uncertainty.²

I want to remind you of our key truth today . . .

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONFIRMS YOUR SALVATION.

The Holy Spirit changes your conduct! He frames your freedom. Thirdly . . .

3. HE INTERPRETS YOUR IDENTITY.

Romans 8:15–16... For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit

² John F. MacArthur Jr., [Romans](#), vol. 1, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 430.

Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God.

J.I. Packer, in his monumental book, *Knowing God*, indicated that . . .

“Adoption is the highest privilege that the gospel offers: higher even than justification.”

It is one thing for God the Father to forgive our sins. It is entirely another for Him to adopt them us into His forever family.

In the Roman world of the first century, an adopted son was a son deliberately chosen by his adoptive father to perpetuate his name and inherit his estate.

As a believer, you are not merely forgiven. You are graciously invited into God’s family as His child.

In Disney’s animated movie *Toy Story*, Woody (a plush toy cowboy) confronts Buzz Lightyear (a toy astronaut) with the fact that he is only an action figure and not really a space hero. Early in the movie Woody shouts, "You’re not a space

ranger! You're an action figure—a child's plaything."

Only after failing to fly, Buzz realizes the truth of Woody's statement. Grief-stricken and disillusioned, Buzz hangs his head in resignation, declaring, "I'm just a stupid, little, insignificant toy."

Woody later seeks to comfort his friend by underscoring the love of the boy who owns them both. "You must not be thinking clearly. Look, over in that house, there's a kid who thinks you're the greatest, and it's not because you're a space ranger; it's because you're his."

As Buzz lifts his foot, he sees a label affixed to the bottom of his little shoe. There in black permanent ink is the name of the little boy to whom he belongs. Seeing the image of his owner, Buzz breaks into a smile and takes on a new determination and confidence. (Source: Toy Story (Disney, 1995), rated G, directed by John Lasseter)

Glory to God. The Holy Spirit interprets your identity . . .

John 1:12... But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name,

1 John 3:1–2... See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and *such* we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. **2** Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

He speaks to your heart and says, "You are a child of God!"

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONFIRMS YOUR SALVATION.

The Holy Spirit *changes your conduct*. He *frames your freedom*. He *interprets your identity*.
Fourthly:

4. HE DEFINES YOUR DESTINY.

Romans 8:16–17... The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*.

The same indwelling Spirit who assures us that we are God's children also assures us that we are his heirs.³

Galatians 4:7... Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

In the arithmetic of earth, if each heir receives an equal share of an inheritance, each gets only a certain fraction of the whole amount. But heaven is not under such restrictions. *Every* adopted child

³ John R. W. Stott, [*The Message of Romans: God's Good News for the World*](#), The Bible Speaks Today (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 235.

of God will receive the *full* inheritance with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Everything that Christ receives by divine right, we will receive by divine grace.⁴

Hey, don't overlook the last part of verse 17 . . .

"... if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*."

MacArthur stated . . .

It is therefore inevitable that whether persecution comes in the form of mere verbal abuse at one extreme or as martyrdom at the other extreme, no believer is exempt from the possibility of paying a price for his faith. When we suffer mockery, scorn, ridicule, or any other form of persecution because of our relationship to Jesus Christ, we can take that affliction as

⁴ John F. MacArthur Jr., [*Romans*](#), vol. 1, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 445.

divine proof we truly belong to Christ and that our hope of heavenly glory is not in vain, that ultimately we will also be glorified with Him.⁵

Oh, what a destiny is yours as a believer, a child of God, an heir of God, and a co-heir with Christ Himself!

CONCLUSION

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONFIRMS YOUR SALVATION.

He changes your conduct. He frames your freedom. He interprets your identity. He defines your destiny.

Examine yourself. Make sure that you are saved. Turn from your sin and receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord by faith.

⁵ John F. MacArthur Jr., [Romans](#), vol. 1, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), 447.

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CFBC... "Series on Romans 8"

Now if you are a believer. You need to know that
you can live with assurance!